Part I. General description of the origins and present situation of the Workshops for the Blind in Great Britain

HISTORY UP TO 1939

1. It was brought to our notice, very early in our enquiries, that the first essential in studying the problems of workshops for the blind is a knowledge of their long history. The following is a brief summary.

2. For centuries it was assumed that the blind were unemployable. However, at the end of the eighteenth century, and during the earlier years of the nineteenth, a number of schools were established by charitable organisations, in which the blind were taught to read in embossed type, and in which they also came to be taught certain industrial handcrafts which proved to be within the capabilities of the pupils. The aim was to enable them to do something to support themselves by work in their own homes after they left the school. The main occupations taught in those early days were basket-making, mat-making, canework, mattress-making in Scotland, and hand-knitting for women and girls. Brush making and boot repairing for men, and machine knitting for women, were introduced later. These remained the main occupations for the blind until recent years, and have become known as the "traditional blind trades".

3. It was found that few of the blind people trained in the early institutions were able to support themselves without help. In Scotland, the schools had aimed from the start to provide special workshops in which work was provided for former pupils, and their earnings were supplemented by payments from charitable funds. This practice came to be adopted also in England. Some of the workshops founded in this early period, such as those of the Royal Blind Asylum, Edinburgh, the Bristol Royal Blind Asylum, Henshaw's Asylum, Manchester, and the Royal London Society for the Teaching of the Blind, are still in existence today.

4. These early workshops were, however, too few to meet the need. An enquiry instituted by the Charity Organisation Society in 1874 showed that there were only 800 blind people in workshops in the United Kingdom, though there were thousands unemployed. In 1889 a Royal Commission on the Condition of the Blind in the United Kingdom recommended that a workshop should be established in every large centre of population where one did not already exist. This was not fully implemented since development was left to voluntary organisations without support from Government funds; but public generosity did make possible a very considerable increase in the number of workshops, though the extent of the provision varied widely between different parts of the country. The Commission also recommended that Local Education Authorities should be empowered to assist blind persons to learn a trade, and this was carried into effect by the Secondary Education Act of 1902.

5. As the numbers of blind workers in workshops increased, the need was felt for a national organisation. In 1893 a trade union was formed with the title

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

of the National League of the Blind. It conducted a vigorous campaign for State aid for the blind and improvements in workshop conditions, and can claim some of the credit for those which later took place. It is still very active in the workshops, as well as in other spheres.

6. In 1914, the Government appointed a Departmental Committee on the welfare of the blind, which made a comprehensive investigation into conditions in the special workshops—the last until our own appointment. The Committee concluded, after exhaustive enquiries, that the traditional handcraft trades were still the most suitable form of industrial employment for the blind. They noted, however, that a blind man working in these trades needed sighted supervision, and even so, could seldom achieve more than half the output of a sighted worker; so that it was essential that employment should continue to be provided in special workshops, where the earnings of the blind could be supplemented. They estimated that there were from 2,600 to 3,000 blind people already in workshops in the United Kingdom, but that there were a further 3,000 employable blind persons, some already trained in the traditional trades, who were without work. They therefore recommended that workshop accommodation should be doubled, with assistance from public funds, and that some Government Department should be entrusted with the "control of blind institutions", and should take steps to improve efficiency and obtain Government contracts, and made grants to "certified institutions".

7. The Committee made a detailed investigation of the blind workers' wages. They found that the usual practice was to pay blind workers their earnings according to work done, calculated at the piece-work rates paid under the normal trade union agreements applicable to sighted workers in the trade concerned, plus "augmentation", which was regarded as a charitable payment not forming part of wages. There were many different systems for the calculation of these augmentation payments—they might be at a flat rate, on a sliding scale up to a fixed "minimum wage", or entirely at the workshop's discretion. The Committee considered no such system to be entirely satisfactory, but made no suggestion of their own. This and many of the other problems which they considered, such as the difficulties of workshops in securing markets, and the wide variations in standards of work, have still not been resolved.

8. Following the Committee's Report, the Ministry of Health and the Department of Health for Scotland assumed responsibility for blind welfare, and in 1919 Government grants were offered to the workshops for the first time. The following year saw the passage of the Blind Persons Act, 1920, under which county and county borough councils (large burghs in Scotland) were given the duty of registering people who were "so blind as to be unable to perform any work for which eyesight is essential" (not necessarily totally blind), and providing welfare services for them, including the provision of employment. After the passage of the Local Government Act, 1929, Government grants were no longer paid direct to workshops, but were absorbed in the block grant payable to local authorities, whose statutory duties towards the blind remained. They might choose either to provide their own workshops, or to make a financial contribution towards those run by voluntary institutions; most chose the latter course, often limiting their help to grants designed to meet all or part of the augmentation payments to the blind workers, leaving the institution to pay the rest of their wages. In this way the traditional system of dividing every worker's wage into "earnings" and "augmentation" became still more firmly entrenched in the voluntary workshops; it was adopted also in the few workshops run

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

directly by local authorities. The amounts of augmentation payments, and the methods of determining them, continued to vary widely.

9. As a result of local authority and Government help, workshop accommodation was expanded still further. By 1939 there were more than sixty workshops in Great Britain, with about 4,500 blind workers. There were, however, interesting variations in different parts of the country. Scotland provided more workshop places, in proportion to the blind population, than did England; but they were concentrated in a few cities, to which, presumably, blind persons were expected to move their homes if necessary. In the North of England, by contrast, especially in Lancashire, almost every town had its own workshop. In other parts of England, workshops tended to be more widely scattered; but here, unlike Scotland, their facilities were supplemented by the organisation, often by the workshops themselves, of "home-workers schemes". Under these schemes, blind people who had been trained in traditional trades but were out of reach of workshops, and also some engaged in other occupations such as piano-tuning and poultry keeping, were helped to set up in business in their own homes. They were provided with equipment, materials, advice and help in marketing; and their earnings were supplemented by payments from the local authorities.

10. As the workshops developed, the need was felt for closer co-operation and opportunities for workshop managers to discuss their common problems. These were the objects of the National Association of Workshops for the Blind (N.A.W.B.), which was established in 1929. It has always had a wide membership among both voluntary and municipal workshops, almost all of which are now members. It has remained a very active body up to the present day.

11. Although industrial processes outside the workshops were changing rapidly during these years, the work provided within them still largely consisted of the handcrafts recommended by the Departmental Committee in 1917. There were, however, a few experiments in other types of work, such as cardboard box making, soap making, and the making of knitting needles.

12. In the period between the wars, there was some advance in the employment of the blind in professional and commercial occupations, but these were suited only to a minority. Those seeking industrial work had virtually no avenue of employment except in the workshops and home-workers schemes. In these circumstances, the choice of blind persons for training and subsequent workshop employment was selective, since, except in the very few workshops offering employment in non-traditional trades, the workers were all expected to be capable of fully skilled craft work. The training of the blind, whether adults or young persons, in these skilled trades, remained the responsibility of local education authorities. It was carried out either in special training institutions or in the workshops themselves. In most trades, training lasted for four or five years and followed a standard syllabus.

HISTORY SINCE 1939

CHANGES IN THE LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WORKSHOPS

13. An Inter-Departmental Committee on the Rehabilitation and Resettlement of the Disabled was appointed in 1941, under the chairmanship of Mr. George Tomlinson (then Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

and National Service), and reported in 1943. They noted that blind welfare organisations had at last found it possible, under war-time conditions, to place some blind people in ordinary industry, in processes such as packing and the testing of precision instruments. The Committee favoured the placing of the disabled, including the blind, in ordinary employment wherever possible, but concluded that "It is not to be expected that the whole or even the majority of the employable blind can be permanently absorbed in ordinary employment, and the need for employment under sheltered conditions will therefore remain". They considered that the provision of sheltered employment for the blind should remain a duty of local authorities, but that there should be some co-ordination with the provision of sheltered employment for other classes of the disabled, which they recommended should be extended.

14. The Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, carried into effect the recommendations of the Tomlinson Committee. It provided, among other things, for the registration by the Ministry of Labour of disabled people who were considered capable of remunerative work but substantially handicapped in obtaining it by their disability. Section 15 of the Act, dealing with sheltered employment, stated that "facilities may be provided . . . for enabling persons registered as handicapped by disablement who by reason of the nature or severity of their disablement are unlikely at any time or until after the lapse of a prolonged period to be able otherwise to obtain employment, or to undertake work on their own account (whether because employment or such work would not be available to them or because they would be unlikely to be able to compete therein on terms comparable as respects earnings and security with those enjoyed by persons engaged therein who are not subject to disablement), to obtain employment or to undertake such work under special conditions, and for the training of such persons for the employment or work in question". The Section empowered the Minister of Labour to set up a special non-profit making company for this purpose (Remploy Ltd., which now has about 90 factories employing over 6,000 severely disabled persons), and also to make grants towards approved "facilities" provided by voluntary organisations or local authorities "under any enactment conferring powers on them in that behalf".

15. Following the passage of this Act, it was decided that the Central Government responsibility for all aspects of the rehabilitation, employment, and placing of the adult blind should become that of the Ministry of Labour. However, local authorities remained under a statutory duty to provide sheltered employment for the blind, as part of their welfare services, under the National Assistance Act, 1948, which repealed and replaced the Blind Persons Acts. Accordingly, in 1948, the Minister of Labour, in the exercise of his powers under Section 15 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, offered to pay grants towards local authority expenditure in respect of workshops for the blind; and also agreed to take over from local education authorities the responsibility for the training for workshop employment of blind persons over twenty-one years of age (eighteen in Scotland). The training of blind persons under twenty-one for such employment remained, in England and Wales, the responsibility of local education authorities, who provided it not in the workshops but in residential further education establishments.

THE CHANGE IN THE EMPLOYMENT POSITION OF THE BLIND, AND ITS EFFECT ON THE WORKSHOPS

16. Meantime, the placing of the blind in ordinary industry had developed to an extent not foreseen by the Tomlinson Committee. It was demonstrated that

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

there were many semi-skilled and unskilled industrial occupations—especially, but by no means exclusively, in the engineering industry—in which the work was repetitive and visual discrimination was not needed; and that on such work, unlike the traditional handcrafts, blind people could, usually after only a short period of training, achieve an output comparable with that of the sighted. Specialised rehabilitation and placing services were developed, by voluntary organisations and local authorities. These services, working in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour, which was then developing its special employment services for the disabled, were able to place increasing numbers of the blind in industrial work, even after the war had ended. They were usually, though not invariably, the newly blinded or the unemployed, rather than people from the workshops. The numbers of blind persons in ordinary employment of all kinds in England and Wales rose from about 3,000 at the time of the Tomlinson Committee to about 5,000 in 1949. The increase was, however, confined to England and Wales; in Scotland, where there was no special placing service, the number of blind persons in employment in ordinary industry declined over the same period.

17. This movement towards ordinary employment received a considerable impetus from a Working Party appointed by the Minister of Labour in 1948, to investigate opportunities for the employment of the blind in industry and in public and other services. Their report, published in 1951, pointed out that workshop employment was still regarded as the normal goal of blind school-leavers; and recommended the establishment of a pilot educational institution for blind adolescents, whose curriculum, unlike that of the further education establishments, would be designed to allow a choice between open and sheltered employment. The Royal National Institute for the Blind has in fact now established a pre-vocational training centre of this kind at "Hethersett", Reigate, to which young blind persons are sent by education authorities and from which many go on to ordinary employment. Nowadays, however, the majority of blind people seeking employment are men or women who have lost their sight in adult life. The Working Party found that, while newly-blinded adults had more opportunities for employment in ordinary industry than had blind adolescents, their chances varied widely in different parts of the country—due partly to the nature of local industry, but also to the uneven development of the specialist placing services in England and Wales, and the lack of any such service in Scotland. They recommended that the newly-blinded should have fuller access to rehabilitation facilities, and that the specialist placing services should be further developed. Some expansion of these services has since been effected, though less than the Working Party had hoped. The number of the blind in ordinary employment is still increasing steadily (of recent years in Scotland as well as elsewhere) and had reached about 6,600 by 1960.

18. In these circumstances, the number of blind persons in workshops for the blind declined, but not to the extent which might have been expected. There were nearly 4,400 blind workers in workshops in 1941 and in 1960 there were still about 3,650. The decline in the number of blind persons in home-workers schemes was steeper—from about 1,800 to about 1,150 over the same period; but in total there was a drop, between 1941 and 1960, of only about 1,400 in the numbers of blind persons in sheltered employment, as against an increase of 3,600 in the number in ordinary employment—and this despite a fall in the numbers of blind persons of working age. Since 1941, the proportion of blind persons of working age in employment of all kinds has increased from 22 per cent. to 33 per cent. Detailed statistics are given in Appendix 2.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

19. Numbers in the workshops were kept up, partly because waiting lists were virtually eliminated, and partly because, finding themselves with more vacancies than applicants, the workshops were often prepared to give a trial to blind people of a type who would, before the war, have been considered unemployable. In general, the new recruits who have come into the workshops in recent years have been older, less capable, and less adaptable than the pre-war entrants. They have not generally been well suited to training in the traditional handcrafts. These have remained the main occupations in the workshops, despite the great changes taking place in the employment of the blind elsewhere.

THE PIERCY REPORT OF 1956 AND THE DISABLED PERSONS (EMPLOYMENT) ACT, 1958

20. In 1953, a Committee, under the Chairmanship of Lord Piercy, was appointed jointly by the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Health, and the Secretary of State for Scotland, to review the existing provision for the rehabilitation, training, and resettlement of disabled persons. They reported in 1956. They expressed agreement with the view of the Tomlinson Committee that sheltered employment is only second best to open employment, and that "Nothing . . . could be worse than the prospect of a group of disabled people . . . remaining the whole of their working lives in a sheltered environment as a matter of course". They took the view that the aim should be to facilitate transfer from sheltered employment to work under ordinary conditions, wherever possible, and that with this end in view "all sheltered workshops, whether for the blind or the sighted, should be regarded as places of employment with as high as possible a rate of individual productivity". They expressed some doubt whether this was the position in the workshops for the blind, where they thought some of the workers to be "incapable of making a significant contribution to production". They considered that the inclusion of local authority powers to provide facilities for sheltered employment under the heading of "welfare services" in the National Assistance Act might have led to confusion. They therefore recommended that all local authority powers to provide sheltered employment of the kind envisaged in Section 15 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, should be transferred to that Act from the National Assistance Act, which would, however, still cover the provision of diversionary occupation for those capable only of a modicum of effort and industry. In this way, a clear distinction would be drawn between "those who are properly to be regarded as in the employment field and those who are not". This recommendation was carried into effect by Section 3 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1958, which transferred to the Ministry of Labour full responsibility for approval of arrangements for the provision of sheltered employment as defined in the 1944 Act. Workshops for the blind are therefore now provided entirely under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts.

WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND TODAY

GENERAL

21. There are about 3,650 blind workers (including 700 women) employed in sixty-seven workshops, of which five are in Scotland, fifty-five in England, and seven in Wales. In recent years there has been a tendency for local authorities to take over workshops run by voluntary institutions, but there are still only twenty-seven run directly by local authorities. The majority are still run by voluntary organisations who often provide other services such as welfare centres,

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

homes, or schools, besides workshops. Since the workshop service had heen, up to the passage of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1958, legally part of the welfare services for the blind, it remains within the province of local authority Welfare Committees and Welfare Officers.

22. A full list of the workshops is given in Appendix 3. Most employ hoth men and women. They vary in size from the Royal Blind Asylum, Glasgow, a municipal workshop run hy a consortium of twenty-three local authorities with nearly 300 hlind workers, to tiny workshops, some voluntary and some municipal, employing only half-a-dozen hlind people. Most have between 20 and 100 hlind workers. All but one of the workshops in Scotland are large; they employ between them over 750 blind workers—20 per cent. of the Great Britain total. The majority of workshops in the Midlands and the South of England are also large and fairly widely scattered. In the North of England, however, there are no less than 29 workshops, mostly small, and often within a few miles of each other; these employ between them over 1,300 hlind workers—more than a third of the total. The seven workshops in Wales range in size from six to 65 hlind workers and employ hetween them over 200 hlind persons.

23. The premises occupied hy the workshops are very varied. Some enjoy modern purpose-built huildings, though they may have to share them with welfare services. Others are in old premises which were originally intended for other uses hut have heen adapted and extended, more or less successfully. Many are short of space for any new developments. When judged hy modern standards some workshops must he considered as unsuitahle for housing economic production.

MANAGEMENT, ORGANISATION AND SUPERVISION

24. The management of a workshop is normally vested in a management committee appointed by the voluntary organisation or the local authority concerned and this committee appoints the workshop manager. It is unusual for managers to he drawn from among persons with experience of management in ordinary industry. Usually they have had previous experience of work with the hlind. Often they have worked their way up from a junior position in the same or another workshop. Sometimes their experience has been more on the welfare than the workshop side of the institution or authority concerned. Many—including managers of some of the larger workshops—are expected to concern themselves with other matters, such as the organising of home teaching and other blind welfare services, or a home-workers scheme, school, adolescent training centre, or with homes for the hlind, or with all these things. In some workshops administered by voluntary organisations the manager is also responsihle for the raising of charitable funds. Where such responsihilities are heavy, a works manager may also be appointed as deputy to the workshop manager.

25. Almost all workshops, whatever their size, are engaged in more than one trade. A workshop with no more than 20 or 30 hlind workers will usually have three or four departments engaged in quite different work, for example, hrushes, baskets, mats and machine knitting; a large workshop may have more. This is the traditional arrangement, designed to ensure that, as far as possihle, hlind persons who had had training in any of the usual handcrafts could find employment in their own locality, and that the newly-hlinded adult should have a choice of trades availahle to him. Each department normally has its own foreman who

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

may or may not be a working foreman, with perhaps an assistant if the department is large. The majority of foremen are sighted men recruited from ordinary industry, though there are a few blind foremen who have worked their way up within the workshops.

THE BLIND WORKERS AND THEIR WORK

26. There are considerable variations in the competence of the blind workers in the workshops, due to differences in their industry, ability and skill—the latter partly because training in some workshops is more efficient than in others. Blind workers also vary in the degree of their disability. Most of those who come within the statutory definition of blindness are not totally blind, and some have enough sight to be of limited use in their work. They have thus an advantage over the totally blind, particularly in the traditional skilled handcrafts. On the other hand, some of the blind workers have additional disabilities, such as deafness. These differences partly account for the wide range of performance and output which can often be seen in the workshops, even among men working side by side in the same trade.

27. Most of the blind workers are middle-aged or elderly. The average age is high, and rising; in 1957, 37 per cent. were over fifty years of age; and in 1959, 41 per cent. This high average age arises mainly because blindness is more common among people aged between forty and sixty-five than at younger ages, and also because a higher proportion of the younger blind people are now entering ordinary employment than in previous generations. A statistical analysis of the age distribution is given in Appendix 4.

28. The trades on which the workers are engaged are listed in detail in Appendix 5. The great majority are still on handcraft work. Indeed, much of the work done, and the methods used, are just as they were described in the report of the Departmental Committee of 1917. The main trades followed are:

(a) *Basket-making*, which employs more than 900. This was the earliest and is the best-known of all trades for the blind. Virtually no new processes have been developed in this industry, whether within the workshops or outside them, but it has been declining in this country for many years, due to competition from abroad, and, recently, from substitutes such as plastic containers. Workshops for the blind, where the volume of basket work has fallen comparatively little, now employ about one quarter of all the basket workers in Great Britain. They produce a full range of basket-ware, but the heavier industrial baskets predominate.

(b) *Brush-making*, on which more than 750 workers are employed, mostly in the manufacture, by hand, of pitch-set brushes—a process which is now tending to be replaced by machine production in ordinary industry; it is still however the usual method of making brushes for road-sweeping machines, and these are the mainstay of many workshops' brush departments. Handmade wire-drawn brushes are also produced; in the rest of the industry this process is largely limited to special types of industrial brushes and to high quality brushwork not within the competence of blind workers. Today most brushes are made by machine, but only two workshops are known to have installed such machinery. Workshops for the blind account for only a small fraction of the national output of brushes.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

(c) *Coir mat-making*, which employs nearly 400 workers, using hand looms. This process has almost disappeared from ordinary industry, due to competition from countries such as India, where such mats can be produced at a lower cost. The workshops too can find little market today for doormats of standard size, but there is some trade in special sizes and particular types such as gymnasium mats. The British mat industry now consists mainly of the manufacture (by machine) of coir matting, but such work is not performed in the workshops for the blind.

(d) *Bedding and upholstery*, which employs more than 300 men and nearly 100 women. In Scotland this is one of the main traditional trades, carried on in all five workshops, but it is found in only a minority in England and Wales. This trade is less skilled than the others, and blindness is not such a handicap in speed of work. Moreover, the processes used in the workshops are much more akin to those in industry generally.

(e) *Boot and Shoe Repairing*. This is another traditional trade, which has been taught to the blind from early times, but it now occupies only about 70 of the workshop employees. The blind in this trade are very handicapped, even compared with other traditional trades, since not only are they slow, but they cannot undertake some of the more delicate operations necessary for the kind of shoes now commonly worn by all sections of the community. Workshops have therefore found that they must either employ a good deal of sighted labour or concentrate on the less exacting kind of work such as the repair of heavy boots—where however they have to face competition from modern fully-mechanised shoe repairing factories. In these circumstances, the trade is tending to disappear from the workshops.

(f) *Wire-work* is a comparatively new trade which now employs some 85 workers (mostly men) but resembles the older ones in being carried out by handcraft methods, not always followed in ordinary industry.

29. Baskets, brushes, mats, bedding, boot repairing and wire-work are all predominantly men's trades, though they do employ some women, particularly in the making of light baskets and wire-drawn brushes, and in sewing work.

The trades employing mainly women are:

(a) *Machine knitting*, on which more than 400 are employed. Two kinds of work are done, round-knitting and flat-knitting. In the former process, socks or stockings are produced one at a time by a worker operating one small machine by hand; this method of manufacture is no longer found in ordinary industry, where socks are produced by power machinery on which one worker can easily equal the output of many workers on hand machines. Flat-knitting consists of the making of jerseys, cardigans, etc., again one at a time, on a hand machine. In ordinary industry such work is normally done today on banks of power-driven automatic machines, but only one workshop for the blind is known to have introduced such machinery.

(b) *Chair Caning* is another traditional women's trade on which, however, only small numbers are now employed, usually on repair work. The process has virtually disappeared from ordinary industry.

30. It will be seen that most of the manufacturing processes practised in the workshops are becoming outdated and unprofitable, besides being ill-suited to the capacities of many present day entrants. Some workshops have been conscious of the need to introduce new, simpler and more up-to-date processes, but only a few have successfully done so. Three workshops are engaged in

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

woodwork, including the making of furniture; two have introduced the making of *fibre-covered furniture*, such as bedroom chairs and linen baskets, by simple carpentry operations not involving great skill. Only a few have introduced any mechanised work. Two have undertaken the mechanical processing of *soap* chips into tablets, and one is engaged on *cardboard box making*. Only one has so far introduced a department for *light engineering*, although this is a type of work on which the blind have been conspicuously successful in ordinary industry. Perhaps the most interesting development has been the establishment of a *plastic moulding* department in one workshop, with a fully mechanised production line, making a wide variety of articles, mainly on industrial contracts; it has been financially successful. The total number of blind workers employed in all these newer trades is probably less than 200.

RECRUITMENT OF BLIND WORKERS TODAY

31. About 180 blind people enter upon wage earning employment in the workshops each year. They are drawn from three sources:

(1) In England and Wales, from five residential establishments for blind adolescents aged sixteen to twenty-one (see paragraph 15). Except at the Birmingham establishment (which is developing a course in light engineering leading to employment in ordinary industry) these give training only in traditional trades, leading to workshop employment. They had 100 pupils at the end of 1959, but the number of new entrants was falling—from 35 in 1957 to 20 in 1960—due, no doubt, to the development of the "Hethersett" Centre and of avenues to ordinary employment. Only a few of the new entrants to the workshops now come from this source; there were 15 in 1961.

(2) From among persons trained in the workshops under the Ministry of Labour auspices. These are mainly adults, though the workshops train blind school leavers in Scotland and a few blind adolescents in England and Wales, including "Hethersett" leavers (see paragraph 17) found to be more suitable for sheltered than for open employment. Present training periods are shorter than before the war; they vary according to the trade and the individual, from a few months to three years or longer. The aim now is to get the trainee into wage earning employment as soon as possible. This is the more desirable since, as is shown in the statistical analysis in Appendix 6, nearly half the present day trainees are over the age of forty, and many are over fifty. The trades in which they train follow the normal pattern of employment in the workshops. Appendix 5 shows that of 273 who were in the workshops in May, 1960, no less than 68 were training in basket-making (although the Departmental Committee expressed the view in 1917 that "basket-making is not a suitable trade in which to train a person losing sight in later life"); 61 were training in brush-making; 47 in bedding and upholstery; and smaller numbers in mat-making, machine knitting and other trades. There is a considerable wastage during training, for unsuitability and other reasons. Only about two-thirds of those who begin training in the workshops complete it successfully and enter employment. 120 did so in 1961.

(3) People who enter the workshops as employees without any formal period of training (numbering 47 in 1961), either because they have had training in a traditional trade at some time in the past, or because they are engaged for unskilled employment, such as labouring or packing, for which no training is necessary.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

SIGHTED FIT WORKERS IN THE WORKSHOPS

32. Blind workers are not the only employees in workshops for the blind. It has always been necessary to employ some sighted workers, apart from managers and foremen, to undertake processes unsuitable for the blind. Usually these are fully fit people. In recent years, the workshops have been encouraged to offer such vacancies to suitable sighted disabled people where possible, but this has taken place only to a limited extent.

33. We have been informed that at one time, before the 1939–45 war, some workshops employed ordinary labour alongside blind workers even in traditional trades, so as to improve the trading position, but this is not the practice today. Even so, sighted fit workers may often account for twenty per cent. or more of a workshop's labour force, quite apart from supervisors and office staff. Some sighted help is needed for finishing in practically all trades, except perhaps basket-making; rather more is needed in knitting, bedding and upholstery than in other trades, and there are other ancillary jobs requiring sight, such as the cropping of mats. Much depends on the type of work undertaken, and modernisation often means more sighted labour. For example, the successful plastic moulding department already mentioned has thirteen sighted workers (engaged not on the machine line but on finishing and packing work) compared with twelve blind; and even in the traditional trade of knitting, one workshop which has developed a high-class fashion trade has nearly as many sighted workers in its knitwear department as it has blind. Some workshops are very reluctant to increase the proportion of sighted fit labour, and this is an obstacle to the introduction of new trades or processes.

SIGHTED DISABLED WORKERS IN THE WORKSHOPS

34. A more recent development, still at an early stage, is the employment in workshops for the blind of sighted disabled people in need of employment under sheltered conditions. Local authorities' powers to provide for this group date only from the National Assistance Act of 1948; they are now exercised, like their powers in respect of the blind, under Section 3 of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1958. Few authorities so far have provided separate workshops for the sighted disabled, but quite a number have made arrangements for their admission to workshops for the blind, where this can be done without detriment to the latter. By March, 1962, arrangements had been made with 30 workshops; 124 sighted disabled workers and 34 trainees had been admitted. Numbers are thus still small, but they are increasing rapidly, since several authorities and institutions have recently built, or are now building, new workshops with increased capacity, specifically designed to cater both for the blind and for the sighted disabled; and one or two others, with vacant capacity, are planning to increase substantially in the near future the numbers of their sighted disabled employees.

35. In a memorandum issued by the Ministry of Labour in 1954, it was pointed out that the sighted disabled need not necessarily be employed on the same work as the blind; they could be employed on ancillary work for which sighted fit people would otherwise be engaged; on different work in a separate department; or together with the blind on new types of work with a larger proportion of jobs requiring sight than in the traditional trades. It was thought that the last would be the best line of development, and might make it possible to introduce into the workshops some of the jobs, usually a part only of a

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

process of manufacture, on which the blind are employed in ordinary industry. However, there has so far been little development on these lines. The sighted disabled employed are mainly either on the same work as the blind; on ancillary work such as brush-boring, button-hole making, or store-keeping; or in separate departments on new work, such as paper-bag making or medical appliance making, on which the blind are not employed. Details are given in Appendix 7, which shows the position in March, 1962.

36. There is a special arrangement at the Portsmouth (municipal) workshop, dating from 1947, before local authorities were given their present powers in respect of the sighted disabled. Here, the authority acts as an agent for Remploy, employing in its workshops for the blind about 40 disabled persons, who are regarded as employees of Remploy Ltd. (see paragraph 14). They are engaged mainly in the traditional trades, though there are a few on other work, such as radio repairs. The main difficulty about this arrangement has been that the sighted disabled are paid wages on Remploy scales, which are lower than the augmented wages for blind workers.

THE MARKETING OF GOODS MADE IN THE WORKSHOPS

37. Each workshop manager is normally responsible for the sales of his own products. The main exception is the production of goods for Government contracts, which are dealt with centrally by the National Association of Workshops for the Blind. Together with Remploy factories and other grant-aided workshops for the disabled, and the prisons, the workshops for the blind enjoy some priority in the placing of such contracts, provided they undertake them at normal trade prices. It appeared to the Piercy Committee that despite these priority arrangements, the volume of Government contracts to sheltered workshops was less than might reasonably be expected, and that something should be done to increase it. In 1958 a Committee was established under Ministry of Labour chairmanship, to provide a regular channel of information between Government Purchasing Departments and the priority suppliers. This has had some success; the volume of contracts placed with all such suppliers has increased, and the value of those placed with the workshops for the blind rose from £79,818 in 1958/9 to £175,491 in 1960/61; they were mostly for bedding, baskets and brushes. Such contracts, however, account for only a small proportion of the workshops' total sales, which amounted to £2,393,000 in the twelve months ended March, 1960.

38. Apart from the arrangements for Government contracts, there is only one joint marketing arrangement—a Company known as the United London Workshops for the Blind (Sales) Ltd., which markets certain goods on behalf of four London workshops.

39. The majority of the larger workshops rely primarily on sales to industry, e.g. baskets for fisheries, laundry hampers, skips for the cotton industry or special brushes for industrial requirements; on wholesale sales, usually effected by travellers; and to some extent, particularly where brushes are concerned, on local authority contracts. Purchasing departments of local authorities vary in the extent to which they are willing to give preferential treatment to the workshops, although they have been encouraged to do so by circulars issued by the Miuistry of Housing and Local Government and the Scottish Home Department.

40. Almost all workshops engage to some extent in retail sales; some to only a minor degree, others heavily. Quite a few own retail shops, of which some

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

deal only in the workshop's own products, and sometimes those of other workshops; whereas others do a substantial trade in goods, not made by the blind, obtained through ordinary commercial channels. Two Yorkshire workshops operate a "Buy from the Blind Guild" under which coupons are sold to the public, mainly through Women's Institutes, which may be redeemed by purchase of the workshops' goods.

41. There has been some controversy in recent years about door-to-door sales of blind-made goods. Few workshops employ their own door-to-door salesmen, but quite a number sell a proportion (usually small) of their products to commercial traders, of whom there are about a dozen, who specialise in door-to-door sales of goods made by the blind. Such traders must now be registered under the Trading Representations (Disabled Persons) Act, 1958. Registration cannot be granted unless it can be shown that any representations about benefit to the blind from the sales of the goods are fair and accurate, but many organisations concerned with the blind nevertheless consider that this method of trading is open to abuse.

42. In recent years, especially in times of trade recession, workshops have sometimes found considerable difficulty in marketing their output, and there was, during the 1950s, fairly extensive unemployment and short-time working among blind workers, and an unknown amount of under-employment and of sales at uneconomic prices; though not all workshops were affected. These difficulties have been less apparent in the past two or three years. In the summer of 1961 only one workshop was on short-time for lack of orders, though it could not be said that it was the only one experiencing marketing difficulties.

HOURS AND WAGES

43. The normal working week in the workshops today is 40 hours for men and 35 for women. The tradition of a shorter week for women goes back to Victorian times and seems to be unquestioned. The wages system is still based on the original concept (see paragraphs 7–8) of paying for work done and then adding a supplement—"augmentation"—to bring the payment up to a living wage. In 1940, when the levels of taxable income were reduced, the Board of Inland Revenue stated that these augmentation payments were not legally liable to income tax. Blind workers have since paid tax only on that part of their wage packets which is described as "earnings". This arrangement is peculiar to workshops for the blind. Other grant-aided sheltered workshops, including Remploy factories, pay normal wages without any attempt to distinguish the element of subsidy to each individual. The small numbers of severely disabled sighted workers so far admitted to the workshops for the blind are, however, generally paid wages divided into "earnings" and augmentation, like those of the blind.

44. The principle is that each blind (or severely disabled sighted) worker is credited with "earnings" of an amount intended to represent what his work would be worth if undertaken by a sighted fit worker in ordinary industry. This can be fairly and accurately assessed for the trades of basket-making, mat-making, brush-making, and boot and shoe repairing; since in each of these industries there are national lists of piece-work rates, laid down by the J.I.C. or Wages Council concerned, for all the operations commonly performed in the workshops. In the bedding trade, the J.I.C. does not fix piece-rates but there are agreed time allowances for various processes on which piece-rates are calculated for use in the workshops. No such calculation is possible for machine-knitting,

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

since the processes used in the workshops are not like those in ordinary industry; piece-rates are, however, agreed nationally between the N.A.W.B. and the National League and so are piece-rates for wire-work. In other trades, rates are fixed locally. The great majority of the blind workers are on piece-work; the exceptions are the few blind labourers, who are generally credited with weekly "earnings" related to those of the skilled blind craftsmen with whom they work, and workers in some of the newer trades where work is done on a team rather than an individual basis. For these, the amount of "earnings" credited must be fixed more or less arbitrarily.

45. By 1948, when Ministry of Labour grant was first offered, most workshops had adopted the principle, which had long been advocated by the National League of the Blind, of adding whatever augmentation was necessary to bring "earnings" up to a "minimum wage" rather than paying augmentation on a fixed or sliding scale. However, the amount of this "wage" varied considerably, being sometimes less than a good blind worker could reasonably be expected to earn and sometimes much more than he could normally hope to earn (in a traditional trade). The Ministry of Labour advocated a move away from the concept of augmentation to a system, similar to that followed in the Remploy factories then being established, of paying the worker a full weekly wage, preferably fixed by joint negotiating machinery on the pattern of ordinary industry, which would be sufficient for his maintenance, without any part being labelled as unearned. This approach was not acceptable to the Local Authority Associations in England and Wales, who thought it important to maintain the distinction between "earnings" and "augmentation", and took the view that the latter was a gratuitous welfare payment and that the remuneration of blind workers was not, therefore, an appropriate subject for ordinary industrial negotiation. However, they decided in 1950 to establish a Local Authorities' Advisory Committee on the Conditions of Service of Blind Workers, with the aim of securing greater uniformity. This Committee consists of representatives of local authority associations; the N.A.W.B. and the National League were formerly brought into consultation, but the latter has lately withdrawn. At its first meeting, in 1951, the Committee recommended that blind workers should receive augmentation payments sufficient to give them, with their "earnings", a total remuneration equal to one of the rates provided for unskilled manual workers by the National Joint Council for Local Authority Services. A number of workshops were already operating a "minimum wage" based on this principle, and the recommendation was accepted, in due course, by almost all the remainder. In Scotland, a similar basis of payment had already been adopted, on the recommendation of a Joint Industrial Advisory Committee, composed of representatives of Local Authorities, the Scottish Workshops for the Blind, and the National League of the Blind. This had been established in 1939, and is now known as the Joint Industrial Council for Scottish Workshops for the Blind.

46. Since the "minimum wage", at the level now fixed, was far more than the average blind worker could hope to earn in a traditional trade, the new arrangement meant that blind workers generally had no incentive to maintain, still less increase, their output; indeed, there might be a disincentive, since "earnings" were subject to income tax and augmentation was not, so that an increase in output might mean an actual reduction in take-home pay. The Piercy Report of 1956 (see paragraph 20) commented on this situation as follows: "The Committee can well believe that the payment of a flat minimum wage, irrespective of the value of production, has resulted in the relative value of work done in some

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

workshops for the blind diminishing year after year . . . the Committee does not regard the present system of augmentation as entirely satisfactory and would prefer to have a payment system which depended to some extent on incentive payments and had more regard to the value of the work done . . .".

47. Since then, the majority, though by no means all, of the workshops have adopted some form of "incentive bonus scheme". Additional payments made under these schemes, which are discussed in Part III, are usually recorded as "augmentation".

QUALIFYING STANDARDS OF OUTPUT FOR NEW ENTRANTS

48. The Piercy Committee, when commenting (see paragraph 20) that some of the blind workers were making little contribution to production, added that they were "glad to note that there is some possibility of an arrangement being reached by which blind persons entering sheltered workshops have to be able to demonstrate that they are capable of earning minimum rates before being engaged as workers". The reference was to certain minimum standards of output, expressed in terms of "earnings", in the main traditional trades, which had been recommended by the National Association of Workshops for the Blind and the Scottish Joint Industrial Council, but which were not being applied in all workshops. In March, 1958, the Ministry of Labour, with the agreement of the local authorities' associations, issued circulars to local authorities saying that in future entrants who failed to reach these standards would not attract payment of grant from the Ministry (though authorities might, if they wished, retain them in the workshops as welfare cases). Grants were, however, continued for all blind workers already employed, many of whom were producing less than the output now required of new entrants. The standards have been revised from time to time to accord with movements in the piece-rates to which they relate; those applicable in January, 1962, are set out in Appendix 8. It will be seen that they were mostly below £3, except for bedding, whereas the "minimum wage" at the same date was in the range of £9 to £10 for men, and £7 to £7 10s. 0d. for women. National standards have been fixed only for basket-making, brush-making, mat-making, bedding and flat knitting (and round knitting in Scotland); in other trades the standards to be expected of new entrants are fixed locally.

SPECIAL INQUIRY INTO REMUNERATION—APRIL, 1959

49. A special inquiry was undertaken by the Ministry of Labour into the remuneration of all blind workers in the week beginning 6th April, 1959. At that time, the "minimum wage" in the majority of workshops was about £8 13s. 0d. for men and £6 10s. 0d. for women. The qualifying standards were slightly lower than at present. This inquiry revealed that "earnings" in the three main men's trades (baskets, brushes and mats) ranged from under 21s. to over £8, but that 40 per cent. had "earnings" of less than £3 in the week, and only 16 per cent. more than £5. "Earnings" in other trades were mostly better, particularly in bedding, where nearly a third of the workers were recorded as earning over £6. The "earnings" of women workers ranged from less than £1 to over £6; but 55 per cent. were recorded as earning less than £2 and only 9 per cent. more than £4. Their "earnings" in flat machine-knitting were relatively good, mostly between £2 5s. 0d. and £4 5s. 0d.; but in round machine-knitting—for which the piece-rates had not been revised for a long time—the majority were recorded as earning less than 30s. It was evident that in all the main traditional trades there were some workers with "earnings" below the

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

agreed qualifying standards for new entrants, and that very few were credited with "earnings" approaching the "minimum wage" except in bedding and one or two new trades.

50. The inquiry revealed that surprisingly low "earnings", mostly from £2 to £3 15s. 0d., were being recorded in some newer mechanised trades, notably soap processing and light engineering, in which blind persons might be expected to be able to earn much more than in handcrafts. Subsequent investigation showed that the division between "earnings" and "augmentation" in these cases was open to criticism. The workshops concerned, having no nationally-agreed piece rates to which to refer, had made no attempt to judge the value of the work done on the basis of wages paid for similar work in outside industry, but had fixed piece rates or time rates designed to yield "earnings" comparable with those in the traditional trades.

51. Despite the generally low level of "earnings", nearly half the men and about 40 per cent. of the women received in the week more than the "minimum wage". The additional payment was usually less than £1, but there were amounts ranging up to £4. It is probable that almost all these payments resulted from the bonus schemes mentioned in paragraph 47.

THE COST OF THE WORKSHOPS

52. When the Minister of Labour suggested to the Blind Persons Committee of the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled that a Working Party should be appointed to consider the problems of the workshops, he drew particular attention to five points. These were: the change in the type of blind worker coming forward for employment; the decline in the economic value of the traditional crafts; marketing difficulties; the fact that the value of production was much less than the workers' remuneration and that the wages system gave little incentive to increase it; and finally, the high and increasing cost of providing workshop employment. This is shown in the following table, compiled from the workshops' own accounts. It excludes capital costs:

Financial Year (ending April) (1)	Average "earnings" of blind workers per head (2)	Average augmentation payment per head (3)	Profit or loss (+ or −) per blind worker (not taking augmentation into account) (4)	Net cost of employment per blind worker (total of cols. (3) and (4)) (5)
	£	£	£	£
1947/48	86	130	+ 26	104
1948/49	91	140	+ 3	137
1949/50	95	147	− 21	168
1950/51	97	149	− 37	186
1951/52	105	167	− 60	227
1952/53	113	185	− 75	260
1953/54	114	195	− 84	279
1954/55	Not available	255	− 99	324
1955/56	124	247	−107	354
1956/57	132	265	−120	385
1957/58	134	282	−135	417
1958/59	140	286	−150	436
1959/60	149	290	−153	443
1960/61	158	304	−170	474

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

The figure of "profit" or "loss" in column 4 takes no account of augmentation payments, which are not regarded as part of the wages paid to the blind workers and are therefore excluded from the workshops' trading accounts.

53. As the table shows, up to 1948 the workshops benefited with the rest of industry from the huge post-war demand for goods and services and were able to show a "profit" (ignoring augmentation) amounting in the year ending April, 1948, to £26 per blind worker. Augmentation payments in the same year averaged £130 per head, so that the net cost of providing each worker with employment (augmentation less profits) was about £2 a week—about half the average take-home pay. Thus, the blind workers were contributing substantially to their own support.

54. In 1960, this was no longer true. Augmentation payments had more than doubled, while the trading "profit" had been replaced by a loss averaging over £3 per week for every blind worker employed. The net cost of providing employment (augmentation plus trading losses) was over £9 0s. 0d. a week for each blind worker—slightly more than the blind received, on average, in "earnings" and augmentation together. It would actually have saved money to close down all the workshops while continuing to pay the blind the same wages and augmentation as before.

55. It will be seen that the average "earnings" of the blind workers increased over the period 1948–60 by little more than 70 per cent.—less than the general rise in wage-rates, and much less than that in earnings, over the period. It is difficult to say to what extent, if at all, this reflects an actual drop in output per head, though such a drop would not be surprising in view of marketing difficulties, the decline in the calibre of the workers, and the lack of incentive to maximum production resulting from the wages system. Other factors are the tendency of the piece rates (including cost of living bonus) in some of the traditional trades to rise more slowly than wages generally, and the tendency of some workshops (as in the examples quoted in paragraph 50) to understate "earnings" in trades where there are no nationally agreed piece-rates. A further contributory factor may be that overtime is not worked in workshops for the blind to the same extent as in ordinary industry.

56. The table also shows that the rise in net costs has been continuous throughout the period, irrespective of trade fluctuations. There is no sign of any reversal of the trend.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO WORKSHOPS

57. The heavy cost of providing workshop employment now falls largely on rates and taxes. In municipal workshops, local authorities (aided by Ministry of Labour grant) are, of course, responsible for the trading loss as well as for all augmentation payments. In workshops run by voluntary institutions (the majority), local authorities, with few exceptions, generally meet augmentation payments in full; they may or may not also give financial help towards trading losses. Many authorities contribute generously, sometimes even meeting losses in full, but others limit their contributions or make none at all. In these circumstances, it is not surprising if workshops tend to understate "earnings" where possible (since they can be sure of help with augmentation payments but not with trading losses), to put down all bonus payments as "augmentation" rather than "earnings", and to shrink from embarking on new trades where the division of the wages packet may be a matter of dispute.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

58. The Ministry of Labour pays an annual "capitation grant" to local authorities in respect of all non-capital local authority expenditure on workshops, including expenditure on augmentation payments. The rate of grant has been successively increased from a maximum of £80 for each approved blind worker in 1948, to £240 for each worker from April, 1961 (provided this does not exceed 75 per cent. of local authority expenditure). Grant may also be paid towards capital expenditure. In addition, the Ministry pays the workshops fees designed to cover the full cost of all training given to the blind, and also maintenance allowances to the individuals concerned, who do not receive wages during training. Taking into account the cost of unsuccessful training, expenditure on training averages over £850 for every entrant to workshop employment in England and Wales, and nearly £2,000 in Scotland, where training periods are longer.

59. In the financial year ending April, 1961, the net cost of providing employment in the workshops (excluding capital expenditure and training costs) totalled £1,656,000. It is estimated that the cost in 1962–63 will be £1,680,000, of which 48½ per cent. will fall on the Ministry of Labour, 42 per cent. on local authorities and 9½ per cent. on the funds of voluntary institutions. The cost of training fees and allowances for the same year is estimated at £128,000 and expenditure by the Ministry of Labour on capital grants at £115,000: some capital expenditure will also be borne by local authorities and voluntary organisations. The total net cost of the workshops for the blind, which accommodate less than 4,000 blind persons, is thus now in the region of two million pounds per annum —and it is rising every year. It seems almost certain that it would continue to rise in the absence of any substantial changes in the system. It has been our task to consider what changes there should be.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Part II. The future demand for Workshop places

60. Before recommending changes in the present organisation, we considered it to be an essential part of our task to form the best estimate we could of the future demand for sheltered workshop places for the blind. It will be apparent, from what has been said in Part I of the Report, that while at one time the workshops provided the main field of industrial employment for the blind, this is no longer so. There are now more blind people in ordinary employment than in the workshops and there is, as we later explain, reason to think that the employment of the blind in open industry may become more widespread in the future than at present.

61. We received, however, no evidence suggesting that there was no longer any need to make special provision for the employment of the blind. On the contrary there was wide agreement that workshops would continue to be needed. Many of the present workers have been there for years and are unlikely ever to obtain other employment. In addition new entrants are likely to come forward from the following groups:

(a) *Recently blinded adults* who have had to give up their former work and who cannot be placed in ordinary employment, either because of lack of local opportunities or because, for one reason or another, they are unsuitable for the type of work which is available. Many of these people are middle-aged or elderly. They form the largest category of new entrants at the present time.

(b) *Other persons, whose blindness is of longer standing*, and who have previously been in open industry but who are unemployed and seek admission to the workshops. Such applications at present seem to come mainly though not entirely from among people who have been in the workshops at some earlier period; they too tend to be middle-aged or elderly. At present such entrants are in a minority, and they are likely to remain so, except possibly if there were a serious industrial depression.

(c) *Young blind people* completing their education. These were at one time the main source of recruitment to the workshops, but this is no longer so. Both the number of blind children of school age, and the proportion seeking sheltered employment, have been falling in recent years. It has been pointed out to us that more blind children than formerly have additional handicaps and for that reason are more likely to need sheltered conditions of work. But even taking this fact into account, it seems unlikely that there will be more than 25–30 young blind people seeking admission to the workshops each year, and the number may be even smaller.

62. To assist us in estimating the extent of the future need for workshop places, the Ministry of Labour arranged for local authorities to make a special enquiry in the summer of 1961 into the employment position of persons of working age newly registered as blind during the previous year. A full summary of the results is given in Appendix 9 to this Report. Briefly, it showed that of

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

over 2,000 recently blinded persons more than 400 had already re-entered the employment field; the majority of these were over forty years of age and many over fifty. More than half were in open employment or training for it; of the remainder, 44 had entered the workshops. In the main these were people who preferred sheltered employment or were not thought suitable for ordinary employment, with a few who were suitable for the latter but could find no openings. There were 141 unemployed, of whom only 25 were considered to be in need of sheltered employment; the rest were thought suitable for ordinary employment, though a substantial number, particularly among those over fifty years of age, were thought unlikely to get it. The most striking feature of the survey was that, in England and Wales, no less than 85 per cent. of the newly blinded persons found to be capable of and available for work were considered by all concerned—Local Authority officers, Ministry of Labour officers and Rehabilitation Centres—to be suitable for ordinary employment. The proportion recommended for such work was a good deal lower in Scotland, no doubt because there was little experience of placing in ordinary industrial employment there until very recently. Taking into account that there will always be some entry to the workshops from among people whose blindness is of long standing, the results of the survey accorded with the statistics of recruitment into the workshops in recent years and suggested no new trend. We doubt, however, whether recruitment will continue at the level of the past few years (i.e., about 180 annually including young people).

63. There are a number of factors involved which tend to suggest that the number entering the workshops in future may be rather smaller than at present. These are as follows:

(a) *The attitude of the blind persons themselves*, in particular whether they feel able to face life in sighted industry, or feel they need sheltered conditions. This depends largely on the extent to which they can become adjusted to blindness. Experience has shown that a course of industrial rehabilitation, such as is provided at the residential rehabilitation centres run by the Royal National Institute for the Blind at Torquay and by the Edinburgh and South East Scotland Society for the Welfare of the Blind at Ceres, Scotland, can be of very great help to a blind person in making his adjustment. We were disturbed to find, from our special survey of the newly blind, that less than half the 44 who had already entered the workshops had had the benefit of residential rehabilitation. This suggests that some people are still entering workshops without sufficient consideration of, and assessment of suitability for, opportunities in ordinary employment. It is to be hoped and expected that such cases will become fewer in the future as a result of an extended use of the rehabilitation services. (See also paragraphs 144–145.)

(b) *The attitude of blind welfare organisations to the employment of the blind.* There can be no doubt that in some areas there has in the past been some scepticism about employment of the blind in ordinary industry. There are still instances where local blind welfare is centred on a workshop and newly blind people are encouraged to go into it rather than seek open employment. This viewpoint is found more often in the North than in the South of England, and still more in Scotland, no doubt partly because opportunities of industrial employment have been fewer there; but it is fast disappearing. This changing attitude of local authorities and welfare organisations should result in some blind people entering ordinary employment in the future who would in the past have been discouraged from doing so.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

(c) *The availability of ordinary employment.* The type of industrial work the blind commonly undertake—mainly repetitive semi-skilled or unskilled work—is most frequently found in light industries. In areas of heavy industry (which of course include many parts of the North and Scotland) vacancies are less easily found, though experience has shown that they are obtainable. However, there is today an increasing tendency—stimulated by Government policy—for light industries to be distributed throughout the country, and this should improve the prospects of open employment for the blind in areas at present regarded as difficult.

(d) *The effectiveness of the specialised placing services for the blind.* It would seem from past experience that this is the most important factor. As explained in paragraph 16, these services were originally developed principally by voluntary organisations (notably the R.N.I.B. and St. Dunstan's). The 1951 Working Party Report recommended that the placing of the blind should become the responsibility of local authorities, who might however make use of voluntary organisations as agents. In the result rather more than half the authorities in England and Wales decided to use and contribute financially towards the R.N.I.B. service; two have their own full-time specialist placing officers; but the rest decided to rely on the part-time services of existing officials (e.g. a welfare officer, home teacher of the blind, or workshop manager). In Scotland, where there had hitherto been no placing service, local authorities were unwilling to take action, but the Ministry of Labour appointed one officer, experimentally, to specialise on the work full-time; he has been very successful and a second officer has recently been appointed. The 1956 Report of the Piercy Committee commented that "the present patchwork of administration of placing services . . . may well have had the effect, over the country as a whole, of providing a service to the blind inferior to that available for other classes of disabled" and recommended that the Ministry of Labour should assume responsibility for the service throughout Great Britain. This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but the Working Party has been informed that the Ministry of Labour is about to open negotiations with the various interested bodies with a view to putting it into effect. When this is carried out, it is expected that the annual intake to the workshops will be reduced by about a third.

64. On the other hand, there are some factors which might tend in the direction of increasing the demand for workshop employment.

(a) *Level of Employment.* Any decline from the present high level of employment (national or local) might make placings of blind persons more difficult, though there is no reason to suppose that there would be widespread unemployment among those previously placed. In recent local trade depressions blind workers have tended to suffer less unemployment through redundancy than their sighted workmates.

(b) *Change in Causes of Blindness.* Blind persons—whether blinded in early or in adult life—are tending more than in previous generations to suffer from additional handicaps. Whereas blindness in the past was commonly the result of infection or accident, such cases are now few; today it is more often due to congenital factors, often associated with other disabilities, or to disease, such as diabetes, brain tumour, or neurological disorder. If such cases of double disability continue to increase they may in time reduce the proportion of newly blind who are capable of ordinary employment.

(5299) B

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

(c) *Effect of Changes in Workshop Trades.* At present some of the newly blind, even though unable to find suitable employment in ordinary industry, are reluctant to enter the workshops. This is not merely because of dislike of sheltered conditions or of a segregated blind community—though there are some people with whom these considerations weigh heavily—but because they dislike the long training necessary for the traditional crafts. Others, while they might be willing to take such training, cannot do so successfully because of age or unsuitability. If, as we later recommend, the traditional handcrafts are largely replaced by modern industrial processes, some blind persons may come forward for sheltered employment who at present would not do so or would be excluded. It seems likely, however, from the evidence in the survey of the newly blind, that any increase from this source would not be very large.

65. In all the circumstances, we do not find it easy to make any precise estimate of the number of blind persons who are likely to continue to need workshop employment. There are now about 3,650 blind workers and about 270 trainees in the workshops. About 200 workers leave each year, mainly on retirement, and, even if, as is expected to happen with the introduction of a comprehensive placing service, the intake dropped to 120 yearly, there would still be about 3,000 blind persons in the workshops in ten years' time. In the next Part of this Report, we suggest that there should be more movement of workshop employees into ordinary industry than in the past, but it is impossible to make any quantitative estimate at this stage of the extent of such movement. Any decline in numbers from this cause may well be offset by an increase in the numbers of severely disabled sighted persons admitted to the workshops, beyond the present figure of about 150. This subject is discussed in paragraphs 186–191 of our Report.

66. Taking all these points into account, we think it reasonable to assume that at least 3,000 workshop places will be needed for a long time to come.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Part III. Conclusions and recommendations

(A) THE ROLE OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS

67. It is clear from what has been said in Parts I and II that the role of the workshops for the blind in the future will be very different from their role in the past. There are still people who argue, as did a few of our witnesses, that blind people ought in their own interests to be encouraged to choose sheltered rather than ordinary employment, but this view is not now usual. The converse opinion, expressed both by the Tomlinson and Piercy Committees, is much more widely held—namely, that sheltered employment must be regarded as second best to open employment where the latter is possible. This view, which we share, has been reflected in the change in the law governing the provision of the workshops. Whereas formerly they were part of the welfare services provided under the National Assistance Act, they are now dealt with under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts as part of the "facilities" for disabled persons "unlikely to be able otherwise to obtain employment . . .".

68. We also endorse the Piercy Committee's view that sheltered workshops, whether for the blind or the sighted disabled, are not intended for, and should not include, people who cannot make a significant contribution to production. They are intended for people who, given an opportunity to perform efficient and productive work, can contribute substantially to their own support. Despite the change in the law recommended by the Piercy Report, and carried into effect in 1958, there is still much confusion on this point. It will be impossible to make the workshops more efficient or economic if they are asked to accept people who are incapable of a reasonable output. As the Piercy Committee suggested, the proper course for a local authority dealing with this group is to provide a welfare centre, where they may engage in diversionary occupation, and perhaps earn a little money to supplement their National Assistance or other benefits. We are glad to learn from the Ministry of Health that centres of this kind, catering for all classes of the handicapped including the blind, are now being provided more widely. In districts where they are not yet available, local authorities may be under some pressure to admit diversionary cases to the local blind workshop, particularly if it has vacant accommodation. In such circumstances we consider, as did the Piercy Committee, that diversionary occupation should be provided quite separately. If it must be under the same roof as the workshop (an arrangement which should if possible be avoided) the workshop manager should not be expected to concern himself with it. In no circumstances should diversionary workers share a workroom with workshop employees, nor should they be accorded the same terms of employment. In the next section of the Report we make some suggestions about where the line should be drawn in practice between workshop recruits and others.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

69. Some of our witnesses suggested that many of the present blind workers in the workshops are not really capable of remunerative employment and ought to be in diversionary centres. The evidence we received did not support this view, nor did a special survey of thirteen workshops, undertaken by Ministry of Labour officers on our behalf, whose report is reproduced in summarised form in Appendix 11. This showed *inter alia* that workers of really low working capacity (as distinct from low output, which may be due to many factors besides the capacity of the individual) formed a substantial proportion in only one of the workshops visited. Many present-day workers are capable people who entered the workshops years ago when there were few alternatives: and it is apparent from the results of the special survey of the newly blind that, while the present-day recruits include some whose working capacity is not equal to the demands of ordinary industry, there are others who come into the workshops solely for lack of other openings. It is in our view more the fault of the system than of the individuals that they can rarely achieve a good standard of earnings in the workshops. We make recommendations in the next section of the Report for changing the system.

70. The Piercy Committee also expressed the view that the aim in providing sheltered employment should be to facilitate transfer to ordinary employment wherever possible. We agree that in view, amongst other things, of the subsidy which workshops require to enable them to provide sheltered employment, it should be the policy of management to encourage the blind, especially the younger employees, to take up work in outside industry. At present this movement seems very rarely to be considered—no doubt largely because the kinds of work now undertaken in the workshops are in general so different from those available to the blind in ordinary industry that they do not provide a suitable preparation. If, as we later recommend, changes are made in the type of work undertaken, transfer should be easier in the future than in the past and should be encouraged where it is in the best interests of the blind. In advocating such a policy it is acknowledged and recognised that the overall efficiency of a workshop may well be impaired from time to time by the loss of some of its most efficient and valuable workers.

71. Although it is not strictly within our terms of reference, we have considered whether movement to ordinary industry might be facilitated by providing a special statutory employment quota for blind persons in addition to the quota for disabled persons generally, already provided under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944. We were satisfied, on examination, that such a quota is unnecessary, in view of the general goodwill of employers towards the employment of blind persons, and would in any case be impracticable, as the numbers of the blind are so small.

72. To sum up, the role of the workshops for the blind today is, in our view, to offer wage-earning employment to blind people who, though unable to take advantage of the improving opportunities for the blind in ordinary industry (either because they cannot hold their own in, or face up to, competitive employment or because there are no suitable openings available) are capable of doing work of real economic value. This does not mean that the workshops no longer have a part to play in the welfare of the blind. It is, in fact, their fundamental objective, but it is the welfare of those members of the blind community who are able to make a reasonable contribution towards their own maintenance and thereby enjoy a feeling of independence. The workshops must therefore be organised in such a way as to make this possible.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

73. Our views are summarised in the following Recommendations:

Recommendation No. 1

Workshops should employ only those blind persons who cannot be placed in ordinary employment, but who are capable of doing work of substantial economic value. Any provision for diversionary occupation should be kept entirely separate.

Recommendation No. 2

It should be the policy of workshop managements to encourage the transfer of blind workers, especially young people, from the workshops to ordinary employment, where such transfer is in the interests and to the advantage of the blind.

(B) THE MEASURES NEEDED TO ENABLE THE WORKSHOPS TO FULFIL THEIR ROLE AS EFFICIENTLY AND ECONOMICALLY AS POSSIBLE

GENERAL

74. It is apparent from the evidence that we have received, from our own visits to workshops, and from the report of the special survey referred to in paragraph 69, that workshops, even where engaged solely on traditional trades, vary greatly in their efficiency. Some produce goods of excellent quality, perhaps worth more than the prices they get for them; others turn out poorly made or badly designed articles which sell more through appeals to public sympathy for the blind than on merits. Some are able readily to market all they can produce; others, even among those producing good quality merchandise, find marketing so difficult that they deliberately slow down production, and, even so, may suffer from chronic under-employment and accumulate excessive stocks. Some maintain a high standard of recruitment, taking and retaining only workers who are capable of a reasonable output; others retain workers indefinitely, even if they are contributing very little to production. Some have very good managers, foremen, and instructors, capable of getting the best out of the workers; in others management, instruction and supervision are slack and inefficient, so that new entrants do not get the best possible training and workers are not encouraged to maintain maximum production or given the help they need to do so. Some workshops have unduly high overheads due, for example, to unnecessary clerical procedures; others avoid such expense. These variations in efficiency are reflected in costs. The least efficient workshops can cost twice as much per head as the most efficient, on the same kinds of work.

75. There is, therefore, considerable scope for improvement in many workshops, without any changes in the type of production undertaken; but even if all workshops engaged in traditional trades were brought up to the level of the best in all respects their problems would be far from solution. The best traditional workshops have a high net cost of employment (seldom less than £350 per blind worker per annum) and, still more important, they share with the less efficient the tendency to steadily rising costs.

76. The high level of losses is not the result only of high direct labour costs per unit of output; it is also caused in some cases by uneconomic buying of materials in relatively small quantities, by the high consumption of materials consequent upon product designs which do not make the best use of them, and by high rates of overhead costs relative to a small volume of production.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

77. Fundamentally, the reason why the provision of workshop employment is at present so expensive is that there is no formulation or implementation of an overall policy. Such a basic policy would assist in the selection of more economic work, in the development of more adequate marketing, in the improvement of management and in the establishment of a better wages system. The successful solution of all these problems is, in our view, a prerequisite to the more economic operation of the workshops. We reserve the discussion of the wages system, which is of great importance, to a separate section (paragraphs 154–179), dealing first with other matters.

THE NEED TO MOVE AWAY FROM HANDCRAFTS

78. With relatively few exceptions the workshops are engaged in traditional handcrafts. In the 18th and 19th centuries these occupations were considered the most suitable for the blind since in an age of predominantly handcraft employment these were the crafts in which the blind had least disadvantage. But the situation is now quite different. In outside industry handcraft production has largely disappeared, and the output which enables a worker to earn a reasonable wage is that of the machine which he operates, rather than that of his hands. Even a sighted worker in the modern world finds difficulty in maintaining handcraft output which will enable him to keep his place in the economic race, unless he can develop his work to the point at which it becomes that of an artist rather than of an ordinary craftsman. To retain the blind on handcraft production, therefore, adds enormously to their initial disadvantages. In fact, in no craft has it ever been possible for the average blind worker to equal the output of a sighted person, whereas on mechanised or other repetitive semi-skilled or unskilled work the blind can, as is proved by their success in open industry, closely approach or even surpass the output of sighted workers.

79. It is the continuing prevalence of handcraft production in the workshops which has been largely responsible for the steady deterioration in their economic situation in recent years. Fifteen years ago the actual earnings of the blind workers, although far below those of sighted workers in similar trades, remained, so to speak, within hailing distance of the general wage level in industry. This has become less and less true as output in other industries has risen; and now the piecework earnings of the blind craftsmen form so small a proportion of their total remuneration that in the majority of cases it is fiction rather than fact to say that the worker is contributing substantially to his own maintenance. To that extent the workshops are failing to achieve their original objective of giving workers a justifiable sense of independence. At the same time, demand for the products of the traditional trades has declined owing to competition from modern substitutes and the products of mechanised industry and from abroad, so that the prices the workshops can obtain for their goods have not risen in proportion to the rise in their costs. In most traditional processes, there is the additional difficulty that as these are disappearing from ordinary industry it is very difficult to get competent and experienced supervisors and instructors, and this puts the blind at an extra disadvantage. These trends have resulted in the steadily increasing trading losses referred to in paragraphs 52–54.

80. It has been represented to us that the blind have a pride in their crafts which they should be encouraged to maintain, instead of changing over to machine production. However, we see no reason to believe that the blind would prefer in this respect to be different from sighted workers, who have accepted

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

the changeover from handcraft to machine production. If one of the objectives of the workshops for the blind is to enable the worker to feel that he is playing a useful part in the community, then the blind workers themselves will wish to adopt methods of production which accomplish this aim. Much of the evidence placed before us confirmed this view.

81. We have noted that because of the increasing tendency for blind workers to go into open employment, rather than into the workshops, those who in fact come to the workshops tend, on the average, to be less able than formerly. Sometimes they will be blind people who have some additional disability. But this is not a reason for retaining handcraft production—rather the reverse. Evidence was given from workshops which have adopted mechanised methods of production, that they are able to recruit workers who would not otherwise have been accepted as they could not have achieved a satisfactory output on handcraft occupations.

82. Evidence was also given that blind workers had welcomed a change to mechanised processes from traditional work, and the survey officers found that absenteeism was lower on the former than on the latter. This is not surprising. While the traditional crafts may offer the satisfaction of exercising a skill, they are all laborious, often quite as monotonous as mechanised processes, and sometimes, as we noted on our visits to workshops, much less pleasant. Hand loom mat making is rough, dusty, unpleasant work; brush making, using hot pitch with its attendant fumes, is even less attractive (the survey officers found it generally unpopular); and both are processes largely abandoned as uneconomic in ordinary industry. Basket making, though hard work, can be an aesthetically satisfying occupation; but it is a dying trade with the additional drawback that it is very difficult for the person trained in middle life—as is the typical modern entrant—to achieve a reasonable output. The hand operated knitting machines used by most of the women workers would seldom be found in industry; round knitting is particularly monotonous and even more grossly uneconomic than other traditional crafts. Bedding work, however, though less skilled, is more remunerative and less laborious and unpleasant than some of the other work done. At present bedding departments are not always organised on lines comparable with ordinary industry, but there seems no reason why they should not be. It is true that there are considerable marketing difficulties in this trade, but of the traditional trades it is the one best suited to blind workers under modern conditions.

83. Those among our witnesses who wished to confine the workshops to the old crafts were the exception; most were anxious to see new work introduced, but did not know how this was to be brought about. There was a tendency to view the problem as essentially one of "finding new trades" and to talk of the main need as one of "research into what the blind can do". In our view the main need is not so much for research as for organisation and expert knowledge. There is plenty of evidence that the blind can tackle very many kinds of automatic machine work and also many of the ancillary jobs, such as packing and inspection, which go with it.

84. It is true that in ordinary industry the blind are normally employed as individual members of groups of sighted workers, but we heard evidence that there are many workshops for the blind abroad engaged in mechanised production where from 55 to 90 per cent. of the labour force is blind. Examples were quoted from the U.S.A., Russia, Norway, Sweden and Australia. All were said

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

to be doing much better financially than workshops in the traditional trades. Often it was claimed that they were self-supporting. None reported any reluctance on the part of the blind to undertake the work, or any major difficulty in training them to do so.

85. In this country also, a few pioneering workshops have demonstrated that losses can be cut, and in favourable circumstances profits made, by a change to modern mechanised production, though this involves heavy expenditure on buildings, plant and working capital. We have been supplied with detailed accounts of most of the workshops concerned. One of the two (mentioned in paragraph 30) which make soap tablets is showing a profit on that department, after paying the workers full wages without any "augmentation". The plastic moulding department mentioned in the same paragraph also makes a profit, after covering all costs including wages and limited payments of "augmentation". We are not suggesting that all workshops could make profits. It is likely that the working capacity of the employees in these two departments is above the general level in workshops today. We feel sure however that there is scope for much more development of this kind.

THE NEED FOR A CENTRAL ORGANISATION

86. From listening to our witnesses and from discussions on the occasions of our visits to workshops, we have concluded that the main obstacle to modernisation is the difficulty of embarking upon new projects on a strictly local basis. Apart from the question of finding the necessary funds, the workshop manager, and often the management committee, will usually have very little knowledge of production methods in ordinary industry, nor have they access to the necessary mass-market. The last is probably the main difficulty, which has held many workshops back from making any substantial change.

87. The present system of largely local marketing is quite unsuited to handle the increased output which follows the adoption of mechanised methods, as has been shown in the few cases where mass production has been undertaken. The two workshops producing soap have relied largely on door-to-door sales on a national scale as the solution to their marketing problems, and even so one at least could produce more if it had a wider market available. The only workshop which has extensively mechanised its brush department has, until recently, been unable to find markets sufficient to absorb its maximum production, with the result that the cost of providing employment has not been reduced as much as might have been expected from the increased output per man. The plastic moulding department has built up its own trade markets, largely on a reputation for good workmanship and quality, but it has been a slow process over many years and dependent partly on personal contacts.

88. In the U.S.A., where, as in this country, workshops are local organisations, run by States or voluntary organisations, the problem has been tackled by the workshops joining together to form an organisation known as "National Industries for the Blind". This was encouraged by legislation guaranteeing Government contracts for certain commodities, the distribution of which was entrusted to the organisation. But it now undertakes also a good deal of commercial marketing on behalf of individual workshops and it employs a small staff of technical experts whose job is to advise the workshops about marketing and production problems, equipment, layout, etc. Under their guidance many workshops have become fully mechanised, without any redundancy of blind

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

labour (since those displaced by automatic machinery find work as packers, etc.), without generally increasing the proportion of sighted labour and without insuperable marketing difficulties. The organisation undertakes sales for any workshop which so desires, in return for a small percentage levy which meets the cost of all its operations.

89. In this country, perhaps because the workshops were never given the same impetus of an absolute guarantee of Government contracts, no such organisation has developed. The National Association of Workshops for the Blind does not exercise such wide functions. It has no technical experts on its staff, and deals with marketing only for Government contracts. Since the Ministry of Labour assumed a measure of financial responsibility for the workshops it has had the duty of inspecting workshops and assisting them so far as possible, but it has not been able to give a great deal of practical advice and guidance even on existing trades, as problems of production and marketing, on which advice is most needed, are not those on which a Government Department is best fitted to advise.

90. It is in our view essential for the satisfactory future development of workshops for the blind in this country that a strong central organisation should be established, directed and staffed by people with appropriate business and technical experience, which could guide the workshops in introducing more up-to-date and economic methods and processes. No doubt if workshops for the blind were now being established for the first time, the logical course would be to make them a central government responsibility and set up an organisation comparable with that of Remploy. This is, however, a sphere where history and tradition cannot be ignored; and, even from an economic angle, it is possible that any gains from centralisation might be outweighed by throwing overboard the long experience of voluntary organisations and local authorities in this field, and by the loss of local interest and goodwill which would result. In our view so drastic a solution, though it would have certain advantages, is not the only way of achieving an improvement in the economic position of the workshops. The evidence we received suggested that the need for change was widely recognised and that there was a general desire for positive direction and advice. There was an impressive unanimity amongst witnesses that some kind of central organisation was desirable, and a detailed and thoughtful plan for such a body was put forward by the Joint Committee of the London Workshops for the Blind (see Appendix 10).

THE PROPOSED FUNCTIONS AND STRUCTURE OF A CENTRAL ORGANISATION

91. In these circumstances we believe that the problem can be solved, without depriving workshops of their independence, by the creation of an independent non-profit making Corporation, employing an expert staff. Its functions would be to assist and advise (a) local authorities, who would still have the statutory responsibility for the provision of workshops, (b) voluntary organisations, many of whom would doubtless still act as agents for local authorities, and (c) the Ministry of Labour, which would continue to provide financial assistance on present lines. We are advised that such a body could be established without new legislation.

92. We consider that the Board of the Corporation should be appointed by the Minister of Labour. If it is to be effective and meet frequently, it is essential that it be kept small. We suggest that there should not be more than nine

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

members. The Chairman should be an industrialist of wide experience, and there should be a full-time salaried managing director and three other directors all chosen as experienced in industry or commerce. The remaining four directors would be appointed by the Minister after consultation with local authority associations and other interested organisations.

93. The Board would, through the Minister of Labour, report regularly to the Blind Persons Committee of his National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled, as Remploy does to the Sheltered Employment Committee of the same body. The Blind Persons Committee is representative of all national organisations concerned with the employment of the blind.

94. The staff of the Corporation would work under the guidance of the Board and be responsible to the managing director. Their duty would be to formulate detailed programmes for the improvement of the workshops, to be carried into effect by advice to workshops individually or collectively. There would be two main objects:

(1) To improve efficiency, production and marketing in existing workshop trades. These would need to be continued for a considerable number of years though to a diminishing extent. We have no doubt that there is much that can be done in this field.

(2) To introduce new and more economic kinds of production as rapidly as practicable without undue dislocation or hardship, and having regard to marketing possibilities.

When introducing new kinds of work it might sometimes be necessary to increase the proportion of sighted fit labour employed. We believe that it will be generally recognised that a higher proportion of fit labour may sometimes be in the interests both of the blind, whose productivity would be increased, and of the ratepayer and taxpayer.

95. Initially the functions of the staff would be to investigate and advise. It should be kept small and expanded later, as necessary. In the early stages it would probably be necessary to appoint specialists (supported by a minimum of assistants and office staff) as follows:

(1) A marketing and sales expert, whose task it would be to survey markets for existing products and to consider how they might be extended by better organisation, better selling methods, better design, concentration on particular lines, etc.; and also to explore markets for new products and the possibility of getting more Government contracts and of making sub-contract and sponsorship arrangements (see paragraphs 130–133).

(2) A specialist in production, who would study and advise on choice of products for manufacture (with the marketing expert), on work study methods, factory lay-out, stock control and costing, and be prepared to assist managers on the spot. He would also consider the production problems involved in new trades.

(3) A personnel management adviser, who would advise on the appointment and training of managers, the training of supervisors and workpeople, wages structure, bonus incentive schemes and similar matters.

96. Other activities with which we envisage the Corporation would also wish to concern itself include the provision of an expert design service which could be available to workshops (either by appointment of one or more designers or by

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

negotiation of suitable arrangements with design consultants), assistance with the establishment of standard forms of costing to enable the performance of workshops to be realistically compared, and the employment of development engineers to help workshops to set up new production lines and to adapt standard machinery for operation by the blind.

97. We consider that once the Board has formulated its views, in the light of reports from the specialist staff, on such questions as the best methods of marketing and the lines of production to be encouraged, consideration should be given to the development as part of the organisation (involving of course more staff) of central buying and marketing. To begin with, such a marketing organisation would be largely concerned with the products of traditional trades; but it would have a vital role to play in suggesting suitable new mass production trades for which an adequate market was available, and advising on the prospects of such trades before they were introduced or expanded.

FINANCE AND THE RELATION OF THE CORPORATION TO THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR GRANT SYSTEM

98. The cost of the Corporation's activities would probably not exceed £20,000 to £30,000 per annum in the early days, when the staff would be primarily engaged in initial investigations, and the only services rendered to the workshops would be advisory. At this stage it might be appropriate for the full cost to be borne by the Ministry of Labour. We do not think that a charge should be made for advisory services as this might discourage some workshops from seeking help; and local authorities might well point out that they are not normally charged by the central Government for advice on how to run their services. Once marketing and central buying services were developed, however, a different situation would obtain. It is suggested that these services should be financed by contributions from workshops benefiting from them; and it may well be that, as in the U.S.A., it would ultimately be possible for the Corporation to finance the advisory services also by the commission on sales.

99. We had ample evidence that many workshop managers would gladly seek and follow the advice of such a body and we have no reason to suppose that the Corporation would experience serious difficulties in securing acceptance of its recommendations. However, in the interests of developing a national policy, we consider that the Ministry of Labour should exercise its influence, through its power to give or withhold grants, in such a way as to support the Corporation's policy.

100. We accordingly recommend:

Recommendation No. 3

A central organisation should be established, as a non-profit making limited liability company without share capital, employing a paid staff, which would serve as an advisory organisation to the workshops for the blind and undertake commercial operations on their behalf.

Recommendation No. 4

(1) The Ministry of Labour should not normally offer a grant towards capital expenditure, whether on buildings or equipment, unless the application had the support of the Corporation.

(2) The Ministry of Labour should reserve the right to reduce the amount of capitation grant payable in respect of a workshop which in the Corporation's and the Ministry's opinion had persistently and unreasonably refused to take steps necessary for greater efficiency and economy.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

101. We regard the establishment of the proposed Corporation as fundamental to the improvement of the efficiency and economy of the workshops. The other recommendations which follow are based on the assumption that it will be set up and until this is done we doubt whether any substantial improvements will be generally feasible. The Corporation and its staff will need to give detailed advice, workshop by workshop, on all the changes within the workshops which we recommend.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR INSPECTION: ACCOUNTING

102. We assume in the above and in later Recommendations that the Ministry of Labour will continue to conduct its own inspections of all workshops. At present such inspections are undertaken as a part-time task by Regional officers who are mainly engaged in other duties. We do not regard this as satisfactory. We consider that there should be a small central inspectorate based on Headquarters, with whom Regional officers might be associated. The inspectors would not themselves be technical or business experts, but if they were full-time on the work, they would soon be able to recognise when a workshop should be advised to consult the Corporation's expert staff. They would also be able to ascertain whether advice previously given was being followed. No doubt close informal contact would develop between the Ministry's staff and that of the Corporation, and joint visits might sometimes be appropriate.

103. One minor recommendation may conveniently be made at this point. We found that it was difficult and misleading to compare one workshop with another on the basis of their accounts as, although they are all kept on a standard form prescribed by the Ministry of Labour, they vary greatly in what it is considered proper to enter under the different heads or to leave out altogether. This is likely to create difficulties for the Corporation's staff also. We therefore recommend that:

Recommendation No. 5

The Ministry of Labour should give more detailed guidance to workshops on accounting procedure and ensure through inspection that practice is uniform in all workshops.

BLIND WOMEN WORKERS

104. We should perhaps emphasise that, in recommending changes, we are referring to blind women workers as well as to men. The present strict segregation into men's and women's departments in most workshops seems to us quite outdated. We would expect that on new kinds of production men and women would often work side by side, as indeed they already do in some workshops. Women no less than men should have the opportunity of engaging in modern economic processes. If they are to do so, however, we doubt whether the shorter working week of only 35 hours for women, as against 40 for men, should be preserved indefinitely. Such differentiation is unknown in outside industry. As workshops are reorganised we think the aim should be for men and women to work the same hours, at least in the case of new recruits to non-traditional trades.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

THE NEED FOR CONCENTRATION OF TRADES

105. The present system, under which almost every workshop, whatever its size, has a number of departments engaged in different trades, is grossly uneconomic and poses impossible problems for management. The system of providing a variety of trades in every workshop arose in order to give the blind a choice of occupation without having to leave their home district. This is an important point in traditional trades, some of which require much more skill than others, so that they are not equally suited to all blind persons. But it will have much less validity as the workshops go over to modern industrial work, which usually offers a variety of different jobs—though few requiring great skill—as part of one production programme.

106. The economic size of a department must vary with the kind of work, but it is not often likely to be less than 20 or 30 workers, including sighted staff. We consider therefore, that small workshops with 20–30 workers, which at present usually engage in a variety of trades, should be reorganised, over a period of years, to specialise on one type of production only. The ultimate aim should be to close the few smaller workshops or amalgamate them with others. (This need not mean unemployment for existing blind workers in traditional trades; if unwilling to leave the district or to travel longer distances, they could be absorbed in homeworkers' schemes. We understand such arrangements have been successfully made when small workshops have been closed in the past.) Larger workshops should aim to cut down substantially the number of different departments. Our views are summarised in the following Recommendation.

Recommendation No. 6

Workshops for the blind should not operate numerous small departments engaged in different trades.

MANAGEMENT (GENERAL)

107. There was much evidence of the need to improve the quality of management. In our view, experience of outside industry is much more important to a manager than a detailed knowledge of blind welfare, though he must of course have a sympathy with the blind and an interest in the problems of their employment. We consider it essential that industrial experience should normally be regarded as a basic qualification for all future entrants to workshop management. Once appointed the manager should not be expected to concern himself with welfare of the blind outside the workshop, with fund raising or with other extraneous duties not connected with workshop management.

108. The evidence we received suggested that, at present, when appointments are made, little attempt is made to find people with outside industrial experience and the remuneration offered is rarely sufficient to attract them. One reason may be that management committees do not always contain many people with industrial management experience willing to take an active part in the work. We think such people should be co-opted on to all committees of management. The interest of industrialists has undoubtedly been responsible for much of the commercial success of certain workshops for the sighted disabled of which particulars are given in Appendix 13. We have recommended that such persons should be included in the Board of the proposed Corporation, but we consider that their participation locally is also desirable where it can be secured. However this may be, the Corporation should itself be consulted on the appointment of

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

managers, including the salary to be offered: and it should become the practice for a representative to sit in and assist any management committee considering an appointment.

109. Many present-day managers were appointed primarily as welfare officers rather than for their knowledge of industry and production. Much can be done to help them by the provision of training courses. Indeed, adequate training of managers is in our view a matter of fundamental importance. As a first step we consider that existing managers should attend short intensive management training courses dealing with modern industrial techniques, costing analysis, etc., of the kind arranged for managers in industry generally (e.g. those of the British Institute of Management). The Corporation might also arrange periodic refresher courses designed specially for managers of workshops for the blind. Full use should also be made of courses of training for foremen and supervisors. Competent supervision as well as good management are essential to workshop efficiency.

110. Another way of helping managers without general industrial experience would be through group management of workshops, as proposed in paragraphs 113–115. Such grouping, combined with the provision of training, should mean that there would be no need for any large-scale transfer of managers from their present posts. Exceptionally, however, it might be necessary for the Corporation to advise that a particular manager be transferred to other work.

111. One other matter concerned with management calls for comment. At present there is not always good communication between managers and workers —a matter of particular importance where the blind are concerned—and as a result the workers are sometimes ill-informed about management policies and liable to be suspicious and unco-operative. We have every reason to believe that the workers have much goodwill towards the workshops, and much comprehension of their problems, and that, given a lead, they would be able and willing to play a constructive part in future changes which many see to be inevitable. It is most important for management to gain their understanding and co-operation where major developments are in prospect. We consider that this should be done, either through formal arrangements for joint consultation or through informal discussions, as seems appropriate in local conditions.

112. Our general recommendation on management is as follows:

Recommendation No. 7

Steps should be taken to improve the quality of management and supervision by better selection and training, and by relieving managers of extraneous duties.

GROUP MANAGEMENT OF WORKSHOPS

113. The foregoing recommendation will not fully solve the problem of the many workshops too small to justify the appointment, at an adequate salary, of a man of the competence and experience needed for the pioneer work involved in bringing a workshop up to date with the modern world. A number of organisations giving evidence suggested that, where there were a number of workshops within reasonable reach but too far apart for complete amalgamation, they might be grouped under the control of one manager. A glance at Appendix 3 to our Report will show that there is obvious scope for this, especially in Lancashire and Yorkshire. The aim should be to form groups, each with a total of 100 to 300 employees, but preferably nearer the latter figure. This should make it

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

possible to offer an adequate salary to a man of energy and ability and of the right background. At the same time the institution of these posts up and down the country would provide a promotion ladder for managers of individual workshops and appointment to the latter would thus become more attractive to men of the right type.

114. Representatives of the Association of Municipal Corporations, when giving oral evidence, were favourably disposed towards such grouping and thought that it would be possible for local authorities and voluntary organisations to reach the necessary agreements. We noted that there are already some joint arrangements. For example, the Glasgow Workshop is run by a consortium of no less than 23 local authorities; others are run by two or three local authorities jointly or by voluntary organisations with local authority representation on the management committee, and in London two voluntary organisations have joined together to form a subsidiary company for the production of knitwear.

115. We do not feel it would be appropriate for us to put forward detailed suggestions for groupings; this could be done only on a basis of extensive local knowledge which we do not possess. We consider that it will be for the Corporation, as one of its earliest tasks, to initiate discussions between the organisations concerned in districts where grouping would seem desirable. We emphasise that we regard the following recommendation as of the first importance, and consider that difficulties should not be allowed to prevent its implementation. We are sure that such grouping would be very much in the interest of all concerned, as in the long run it should lead to a reduction in workshop costs. Our recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation No. 8

Where there are a number of workshops in reasonable proximity they should be grouped together under a joint board of management with a manager in charge of the whole group.

THE NEED FOR A CO-ORDINATED PROGRAMME OF CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

116. We have already expressed the view that there must be a steady move away from the old handcrafts to modern types of production. This would include the mechanisation where possible of existing trades, e.g. brush production, and the modernisation of bedding production, as well as the introduction of new manufactures. These need not all be heavily mechanised. There are possibilities for the blind in light assembly work, such as the production of fibre-covered furniture already undertaken by two workshops. There is, however, little doubt that the handicap of blindness is less important, and the employment of the blind more economic, in mechanical processes. The few workshops which have really successfully introduced such processes have found themselves involved in capital costs, for buildings and equipment, in the region of £2,000 to £3,000 per head. Fully to modernise all the workshops for the blind would be very costly; but development must depend on marketing possibilities and will no doubt take many years. In any case, neither local authorities nor the Government could make very large capital sums available to the workshops over a short period in view of all the other claims on national and local funds. Nevertheless, in our view, the need must be accepted for a plan for substantial capital development over an initial ten year period. The size of the investment

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

programme should be agreed between the Ministry of Labour and the Treasury in the light of an estimate of the needs of the situation by the Corporation. We are inclined to believe that the total sum required will be of the order of three to five million pounds. This may seem a high figure, but it would be cheaper than leaving workshop costs, now approaching two million pounds yearly, to continue their steady rise, and perhaps double in the next decade.

117. From 50 to 75 per cent. of this capital expenditure (depending on the resources of the workshops concerned) should, it is suggested, be found by the Ministry of Labour, which already has power to make capital grants of this order. Hitherto, however, such grants have been small in relation to the grants given towards running costs. During the period 1948 to 1961 the Ministry spent £4,810,000 on capitation grants, but only £299,000 on capital grants for new buildings and £56,000 on grants towards equipment. (The last figure mainly reflects the fact that few applications for grants towards extensive re-equipment were received.) In our view the emphasis should be altered; it should be easier, not as at present more difficult, to get help towards economical capital development than towards current expenditure.

118. It is suggested that in the light of the determination of total capital expenditure for a ten year period referred to in paragraph 116, an announcement should be made by the Ministry of Labour of the amount of grants towards capital expenditure which the Ministry is prepared to make over that period. An indication of the probable distribution between different years might be made, but the money should not be lost to workshops through not having been used in the year concerned. The money would be distributed by the Ministry of Labour in the form of grants, on the basis of schemes put forward by individual workshops to the Ministry, through the Corporation, which as we have already recommended should advise on all grant applications. We think that the criterion of the Ministry and the Corporation, in deciding on capital grants, should always be whether they will lead to a substantial reduction in workshops' running costs. If this does not seem probable no grant should normally be offered. Close regard will need to be paid to marketing prospects.

119. In considering the needs of workshops for financial assistance, account should be taken of the need for the provision of extra working capital when new trades are introduced and when output is being expanded.

120. The available capital should not be swallowed up simply on replacement of buildings. There are great variations in workshop premises. A few are very good, many indifferent, some poor. There has not been much rebuilding of workshops in the past twenty years, due largely to Government policies of restriction, first of building and then of capital expenditure, and there is no doubt that some are ripe for replacement. The survey officers found, however, that the level of economic efficiency of a workshop, and the level of happiness and satisfaction of the workers, bore very little relation to the type and suitability of the premises; the quality of management was very much more important.

121. We consider, therefore, that during the period of the initial ten-year capital programme, priority should be given to expenditure which will reduce running costs. In general, new building should be undertaken only where it is necessary for the introduction of more economic types of production. If existing buildings must be replaced urgently, because they are dangerous or unhealthy

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

or are due for demolition, e.g. for town planning reasons, then the opportunity should be taken to introduce new types of production at the same time. Only in very exceptional circumstances should new buildings be provided solely for the rehousing of traditional craft work. If this is unavoidable, they should be of a type readily adaptable to other kinds of production.

122. We must emphasise that a good deal of capital expenditure would have been necessary in the next ten years in any case—far more than in the last twenty years, when it has been deliberately restricted. We are suggesting that capital should be invested where it will bring the best economic results.

123. We therefore recommend:

Recommendation No. 9

There should be a co-ordinated programme of capital development aimed primarily at introducing new forms of production in place of the traditional handcrafts.

MARKETING

General

124. As has already been said in paragraph 97 we envisage that the Corporation will develop a central marketing organisation which will undertake sales on commission on behalf of the workshops. If this is to be successful a satisfactory relationship in marketing and production matters between the Corporation and the workshops is essential. We believe that this may confidently be expected, as the evidence of witnesses from the workshops has been virtually unanimous in favour of some marketing organisation on a non-local basis. Many of them stressed that it is only by the establishment of adequate and steady markets that the workshops can hope to produce on an economic scale.

125. We expect that contracts will be placed by Government, industrial and commercial sources with the Corporation, who in turn will place formal contracts with the workshops wishing to produce the goods concerned. Uniform standards of quality and firm delivery schedules must be specified and accepted, but in the types of new mechanised trades envisaged, this will be easier than in the traditional trades.

126. In return for a continuous flow of orders the workshops will have to guarantee to the Corporation a steady rate of production and will have to give adequate notice to the Corporation of any desire on their part to withdraw from a contract. The Corporation, too, must ensure by adequate consultation with the workshops that it does not accept orders which they cannot fulfil economically or deliver in accordance with the proposed schedules. No doubt, the experts employed by the Corporation will be able to do much in assisting the workshops to achieve these goals.

127. We do not envisage that the central sales organisation should become the sole sales outlet for the workshops. There may be some room for regional marketing to be organised by workshops in co-operation. Workshops may also wish to retain their own local sales outlets. Our survey showed, however, that except where there is large-scale factoring of non-blind-made goods the provision by the workshops of their own retail shops is not economic, and we would expect direct retail sales to decline in importance.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

128. Some workshops have made considerable use of door-to-door sales. Altbough there has been a good deal of criticism of this method, we have noted that it is successfully used on an extensive scale in the U.S.A., under careful regulation by the National Industries for the Blind. We take the view that the Corporation might well consider the extent to which this method of sale should be used for workshop goods and the way in which it should be controlled, and advise the workshops.

129. Our general recommendation on marketing is as follows:

Recommendation No. 10

The Corporation should explore all possible channels for the sale of workshop goods, and should itself provide a central marketing and sales organisation, to be financed by a commission from the workshops on sales.

Sub-Contracting and Sponsorship Arrangements

130. The Corporation could do much to encourage and assist workshops to enter into sub-contracts with ordinary industry, especially perhaps, though not exclusively, in light engineering. This is a field in which the blind are widely employed in ordinary industry and it should, therefore, offer good prospects to the workshops, but they would need the Corporation's expert business and technical advice. It was clear from the evidence received from the one workshop which bas so far undertaken engineering sub-contract work that help from a central organisation would have been most welcome. The Corporation might itself enter into large industrial sub-contracts, which might be sub-let to workshops. Smaller contracts would be locally negotiated with advice from the Corporation, as necessary.

131. Another possibility which should be explored is the development of arrangements with industry on the lines of the Remploy sponsorship schemes. Under these the sponsoring firm provides equipment, materials, and advice, and markets the product, leaving Remploy to supply only premises, management and labour. We heard evidence that these arrangements had proved advantageous to both sides and that the cost per head of providing employment in the Remploy factories engaged on such schemes was only about half of that in their other factories—principally because there were no marketing, warehousing or sales promotion expenses. Sponsorship schemes of this kind would reduce the expense of capital development and they would seem specially suitable for workshops for tbe blind. It should be possible sometimes for them to arrange to undertake one or two processes only, or the manufacture of one or two parts only, of some product which could not be entirely manufactured in a blind workshop as it would involve the employment of too much sighted labour. We were interested to note that arrangements of this kind are made in Russia. Such contracts would have to be entered into by individual workshops which, however, would need expert and detailed advice from the Corporation before concluding them.

132. Finding outlets on the open market for mass production involves very heavy sales costs, as Remploy has found. Provided that the type of work is carefully selected and the terms of the contract suitable, we think sponsorship, sub-contracting, or large-scale wholesale contracts should be a worksbop's first choice, in trades where sucb arrangements are suitable. These might include the production of consumer goods; knitwear, for example, could be made on a

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

commission basis as is done by the successful Haven Products sheltered workshop; and this might justify the introduction of mechanisation. We were interested to note that the extensive system of sheltered workshops in the Netherlands depends very largely on sub-contracts for ordinary industry, and that the Dutch authorities are convinced that this is a more economical method of providing sheltered employment than the production of consumer goods for the open market.

133. We therefore recommend:

Recommendation No. 11

The Corporation should explore the possibilities of sub-contracting and sponsorship arrangements between workshops for the blind and ordinary industry, and give advice and guidance to individual workshops wishing to enter into them.

Government Contracts

134. It may be difficult for industry to offer the long-term stable contracts sheltered workshops need—though Remploy have found that it can sometimes be done—but it should be easier for Government Departments. It will be seen from paragraph 37 that the workshops, as "priority suppliers", do receive substantial Government contracts, but these are placed sporadically, normally on the basis of competitive tendering. We received much evidence criticizing this system of allocation. In the light of the information laid before us by the Ministry of Labour (previously put to the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled and summarised in Appendix 10) we think that some of the complaints are misconceived. In particular, we do not think workshops should expect specially favourable prices for their products. They are already subsidized undertakings and should be willing to undertake contracts at the prices generally ruling in the trade. But workshops relying on Government contracts are economically very vulnerable if the work does not come along evenly. They need a steady flow of work; in Great Britain Government contracts do not normally provide such a flow, though they do in the U.S.A. We heard, for example, of the diversion of a long-standing large-scale contract from a workshop for the blind to a Remploy factory, leaving the former to meet the costs of idle time for a period of months before new markets could be found.

135. We consider that greater efforts should be made by Government departments to give the workshops long runs of work. The best system would be to place a minimum order for a specified quantity for each year over a guaranteed period of at least three to five years, with appropriate provision for price variation. This would not be possible for all types of Government purchases, but it should be for some. Other priority suppliers, besides workshops for the blind, should no doubt enjoy the benefit of similar arrangements.

136. We consider that the Corporation should handle all Government contracts given to workshops for the blind and we recommend that:

Recommendation No. 12

Government contracts should be allocated to the Corporation for distribution to workshops, on a long-term basis wherever possible.

137. The Corporation should maintain close liaison with Remploy and other sheltered workshops and with the prisons, who also rank as "priority suppliers", to ensure that there is no unnecessary competition in the same field. We were glad to note that some steps had already been taken by the Prison Commission to this end (see Appendix 10).

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

138. All the foregoing recommendations presuppose a labour force able and willing to produce a substantial output. This means that there is need to review the present standards of recruitment to and retention in the workshops.

139. No one could regard the present arrangements as satisfactory. As was stated in paragraph 48, new recruits to the main traditional trades have since 1958 been expected to reach nationally agreed qualifying standards of output, based on the average earnings of blind workers in the workshops some years ago. Workshops fix their own, often very low, standards in other trades, and for workers in any trade who were admitted before 1958. As was shown by the 1959 survey of earnings quoted in paragraph 49, the latter often fall below the qualifying standards for new entrants. Even these standards are low in relation to the normal output of sighted workers in the same trade.

140. We had evidence that many workers could produce substantially more than they do now if the wage system gave sufficient incentive. Some, however, could not, at least in their present traditional trades. This emphasises the unsuitability of these trades for many of the present-day entrants, who are expected in middle life to learn a difficult skilled trade, perhaps after years of semi-skilled or unskilled employment as a sighted worker. We consider that if the wages system is changed as we later suggest, and new modern methods of production are introduced, as recommended, there will be far fewer workers making only a small contribution to production. We also think that with expert advice on training, work methods, etc., output could be increased even in traditional trades. We say this to make it clear that in suggesting higher minimum standards of recruitment and retention, we are not advocating the wholesale dismissal of present employees or the closing of the workshops to any substantial proportion of present day entrants.

141. The Working Party is not in a position to say precisely what should be the minimum standards of output to be expected of trained and experienced blind workers, but we are inclined to the view, on the basis of the evidence we have received, that they should be broadly as follows:

(1) In traditional handcraft trades, other than bedding and allied trades, not less than one-third of the normal output of a sighted worker.

(2) In bedding and allied trades, and in new types of production, not less than one-half of the normal output of a sighted worker.

We think that detailed standards should be determined by the National Joint Industrial Council recommended later in this Report. They should apply to all workers, not only new entrants.

142. We regard it as the responsibility of management to see that those of the existing workers who do not already meet them are given every help in reaching the required standards within a reasonable period—say, five years. We think that if Ministry of Labour inspections reveal that a substantial proportion of workers in any particular workshop is falling below them, advice should immediately be sought from the Corporation's experts, who should consider where the solution lies. They might recommend reorganisation, work-study, retraining of workers, transfers to other work, better supervision or a better system of financial incentives. It should not be left to the workers to solve their own problems.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

143. We accordingly recommend:

Recommendation No. 13

Minimum standards of output, applicable to all trained and experienced blind workshop employees, should be established by agreement on the National Joint Industrial Council.

RECRUITMENT

144. If all new recruits are to meet the required standards it is essential that workshops should have a uniform recruitment criterion. The necessary assessment could conveniently be arranged at the two residential rehabilitation centres (see paragraph 63) to which many workshop recruits already go before admission. Any who do not need, or cannot conveniently take, the full course of rehabilitation, might be admitted for a short period only, devoted solely to assessment. We understand that the organisations concerned already have in hand some plans on these lines. They would involve considerable changes in the system of assessment at these centres, which would need to be made in consultation with persons experienced in workshop management.

145. We therefore recommend:

Recommendation No. 14

Potential recruits to the workshops should normally undergo a period of assessment before admission.

146. However careful the initial assessment, it would frequently be impossible accurately to judge a person's working capacity until after a period in the workshops. A period of probation will therefore be necessary.

147. Our recommendation is as follows:

Recommendation No. 15

All admissions to workshops, whether or not to a formal course of training, should be on a probationary basis; and no new entrant should be retained unless he has good prospects of attaining, within a reasonable period, the appropriate J.I.C. standard.

148. It would be for the Ministry of Labour inspectorate, acting in conjunction with the staff of the Corporation, to seek to ensure uniformity in standards of retention.

TRAINING OF BLIND WORKERS

General

149. In view of what we have said earlier about the desirability of moving away from traditional handcrafts (other than bedding), we should hope that as far as possible new entrants would not be trained in them. Certainly there should be no new entrants to grossly uneconomic occupations such as round knitting. Where, however, there is no immediate prospect of the introduction of new work, as is bound sometimes to be the case if the capital development programme is on the gradual basis previously suggested, new entrants may have to be admitted to traditional work; if so, the least uneconomic should be chosen and there should be no attempt to give a full craft training. The survey officers found that within the traditional trades specialisation produced the best economic results, and no doubt the advice given by the Corporation's expert staff

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

on the improvement of production in traditional trades would be on those lines. If so, the aim should be to give the trainee such instruction as is needed to bring him as rapidly as possible up to the required level of output, in a limited range of operations needed for the kind of work on which the workshop was concentrating. It should be borne in mind that the worker will probably be moved to more modern work before the end of his working life.

150. In the past the training given in some workshops has been less effective than in others, so that the blind have not always had a fair chance to reach a reasonable standard. We should hope that this could be remedied by the provision, through the Corporation, of more training for instructors and supervisors in the techniques of instruction and supervision.

151. Our views are summed up as follows:

Recommendation No. 16

As far as possible the training of new entrants in traditional handcrafts (other than bedding) should be avoided; and where it is unavoidable the training should be kept to the minimum necessary for satisfactory output in a limited range of work. Steps should be taken to ensure uniform standards of training.

Blind Adolescents

152. We have previously indicated (in paragraph 61) that we expect that in future the majority of employable blind adolescents will enter ordinary employment. We have considered what form of training should be provided for the minority who will enter the workshops. Since we have recommended that the aim should cease to be to give full craft training, it will no longer be appropriate for blind adolescents, as in England and Wales at present, to be trained for workshop employment in educational institutions up to the age of twenty-one, after leaving school at sixteen (which is the minimum school leaving age for the blind). We heard strong criticism of this arrangement on other grounds, from many witnesses. Most preferred the Scottish system, under which young blind people are admitted to workshops on completion of their education and trained there for their future employment. The usual age of admission in Scotland is eighteen, and we think this is young enough for most blind persons, who tend to be rather immature for their age, to enter upon a strictly vocational course in a workshop atmosphere. We consider that blind young people seeking industrial employment, whether sheltered or open, should be encouraged to pursue their education up to the age of eighteen, preferably by taking a pre-vocational course such as is provided by the Royal National Institute for the Blind at their centre for blind adolescents at "Hethersett", (see paragraph 17).

153. We recommend that:

Recommendation No. 17

The training of blind adolescents selected for workshop employment should be undertaken in the workshops, normally from the age of eighteen.

THE WAGES SYSTEM

General: The Augmentation System

154. The wages system and its effects were widely criticised in the evidence we received and we consider that fundamental changes are essential if the previous recommendations are to have the intended results.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

155. As explained in Part I, the basic principle of the present system is that every blind worker is credited with "earnings", intended to represent what his work would be worth if undertaken by sighted workers in ordinary industry, and to this is added a variable amount in the form of "augmentation", which is not regarded as part of wages, does not appear in the trading accounts, is almost always treated entirely as a local authority welfare responsibility, and is not liable to income tax. (We are advised by the Inland Revenue that this is not an administrative concession but a matter of law.) For the past ten years the practice has been to add whatever amount of augmentation is needed to bring total remuneration up to a "minimum wage", based on local authority wage scales for manual workers.

156. In traditional trades the system has served the purpose of providing a ready basis for the division of financial responsibility between voluntary workshops and local authorities—though this has drawbacks, as is explained later. Another point urged in its favour is that it ought to help costing for pricing purposes, though in fact the survey officers found this often very badly done or virtually non-existent. As the National League of the Blind pointed out, it enables the worker to know the true value of his work—though at present levels of earnings in traditional trades he may well find this knowledge somewhat dispiriting.

The Lack of Incentive: Attempts to Overcome it by Bonus Schemes

157. The system has however grave disadvantages, of which the worst, noted by the Piercy Committee, is that, in the absence of any arrangement for additional payments, there is a complete lack of any incentive to increase output, except for the very few workers who can earn more than the "minimum wage". Indeed there is a disincentive if the worker is liable to income tax. During recent years, however, there has been a widespread adoption of the "incentive bonus" schemes referred to in paragraph 47, which do provide for additional payments. Some witnesses suggested that these schemes were all that were needed to make the augmentation system satisfactory. We therefore examined them in some detail.

158. One surprising feature of these schemes is that, except in London where there is a different system yielding only very small additional payments, the bonus, although related to output, normally takes the form of an addition, not to the "earnings" but to the "augmentation" element of the workers' remuneration. The principle is that a worker whose "earnings" exceed a certain fixed level is given a "bonus" in the form of an increase in augmentation beyond the amount needed to bring his pay up to the "minimum wage". An example might be as follows:

Basket-maker. "Earnings", one week, £5. "Minimum wage" £9 9s. 0d.
Bonus of 50 per cent. payable on earnings in excess of £2 15s. 9d.
Wage packet:

	£	s.	d.	
"Earnings"	5	0	0	Subject to income tax
Basic augmentation (up to "minimum wage")	4	9	0	Tax free
Additional augmentation (Bonus—50 per cent. of £2 4s. 3d.)	1	2	2	Tax free
	10	11	2	(£5 11s. 2d. tax free)

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

TABLE SHOWING THE EFFECT OF BONUS SCHEMES

(see paragraphs 159–163)

(Assume basic minimum wage of £10 p.w. with a 50 per cent. incentive bonus scheme operating on earnings in excess of £3 p.w.)

Real earnings (taxable) (1)	Augmentation (tax free): Up to minimum wage (2)	Augmentation (tax free): Bonus (3)	Augmentation (tax free): Total augmentation (4)	Total gross remuneration (5)	Tax payable (1961–62) by single person* on real earnings (Col. 1) (6)	Net remuneration (7)	Net increase in pay per £1 of increased earnings (8)
£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1	9	— — —	9 0 0	10 0 0	— — —	10 0 0	nil
2	8	— — —	8 0 0	10 0 0	— — —	10 0 0	nil
3	7	— — —	7 0 0	10 0 0	— — —	10 0 0	nil
4	6	10 0	6 10 0	10 10 0	— — —	10 10 0	10 0
5	5	1 0 0	6 0 0	11 0 0	1 5	10 18 7	8 7
6	4	1 10 0	5 10 0	11 10 0	3 10	11 6 2	7 7
7	3	2 0 0	5 0 0	12 0 0	7 2	11 12 10	6 8
8	2	2 10 0	4 10 0	12 10 0	10 5	11 19 7	6 9
9	1	3 0 0	4 0 0	13 0 0	13 9	12 6 3	6 8
10	—	3 10 0	3 10 0	13 10 0	18 5	12 11 7	5 4
11	—	4 0 0	4 0 0	15 0 0	1 3 3	13 16 9	1 5 2
12	—	4 10 0	4 10 0	16 10 0	1 8 1	15 1 11	1 5 2
13	—	5 0 0	5 0 0	18 0 0	1 13 2	16 6 10	1 4 11

*P.A.Y.E. Code No. 35 entry for week No. 52 divided by 52 to give average weekly payments.

159. A fifty per cent. bonus on "earnings" above the fixed level, as in the example, is quite usual; some bonus schemes are less generous, others more so. Starting points for bonus also vary widely. The table on page 44 shows the operation of a scheme with a 50 per cent. bonus paid on "earnings" of over £3 —a fairly typical starting point. It also shows the effect on net pay for a single man of the fact that "augmentation" is tax free, although "earnings" are not.

160. It will be noted from the table that total augmentation decreases by 10s. per week for every £1 earned above the qualifying rate until the "earnings" equal the minimum wage; from this point onwards the trend is reversed, since the worker continues to receive augmentation, on an increasing scale, whereas in the absence of a bonus scheme he would get none.

161. It will also be seen that up to the point at which earnings equal the minimum wage (beyond which the worker keeps his full earnings and gets bonus augmentation as well, so that he gets more than 100 per cent. return for increased effort), a £1 increase in earnings gives a 10s. increase in total remuneration, but when account is taken of the increased income tax payable on the "earnings", the net return to a worker for his increased effort can be as low as 5s. 4d. and is mostly about 6s. 8d. (i.e. 25 to 33⅓ per cent., instead of the nominal 50 per cent.). This, in any circumstances, is a smaller proportion of additional earnings than a worker in ordinary industry would receive and, at the worst, the disadvantage suffered by the blind worker is substantial.

162. The survey officers noted that, partly for this reason and partly because some blind workers are satisfied with the standard of living offered by the tax free minimum wage, a 50 per cent. bonus scheme may not always induce a worker to work to his full capacity. While it may seem odd to count bonus payments as "augmentation", it is obvious that, if they were treated as "earnings" and were therefore taxable, the net gain to the workers from bonus schemes, and therefore the incentive to increase output, would be still further reduced. It was also noted that bonus schemes vary greatly from workshop to workshop, with the result that a week's pay for the same output in the same trade may be very different in one workshop from what it is in another. The survey officers found examples, for instance, of a worker taking home a pay packet of £12 12s. 2d. (over £3 more than the "minimum wage") in respect of earnings of £7 11s.; £11 5s. 10d. (nearly £2 above the "minimum wage") in respect of earnings of £4 9s. 1d.; and £9 18s. 1d. in respect of earnings of £3 13s. 11d.; while in other parts of the country workers with a similar output would get the bare minimum wage.

163. The main reason given for introducing a bonus scheme of this type has usually been that it should, by giving workers an incentive to earn more, reduce the overall cost of augmentation payments. To a certain extent this is achieved. For example, under a 50 per cent. bonus scheme, as set out in the table, a worker earning only £3 and getting £7 augmentation up to a minimum wage of £10 (as in line 3 of the table), may be induced to increase his earnings to £4; his total augmentation would then be reduced from £7 to £6 10s. (as in line 4 of the table) so that there would be a 10s. saving to the local authority. Similarly there would be a reduction of 10s. for every £1 of extra earnings up to the point when earnings reach the minimum wage. If the starting point for bonus, on the introduction of a scheme, were fixed above the average level of the then existing earnings in each trade in the workshop, the result might well be to reduce the overall augmentation costs.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

164. However, the usual, though not invariable, practice seems to have been to put the bonus starting point at or below the existing average level of earnings. It is common to fix the bonus starting point at the "qualifying standard" for new entrants (see paragraph 48) which in most trades (see Appendix 8) is less than £3 per week—well below the point at which the income tax difficulty arises and below the earnings achieved by many workers even in the absence of a bonus scheme. Some workshops have put the bonus starting point even lower, e.g. in one workshop it is £2 2s. for men and £1 1s. for women, in all trades. Thus the immediate result of the introduction of a bonus scheme has often been to increase augmentation payments by giving a number of the workers more augmentation for the same earnings as before.

165. In theory, bonus could also add to augmentation costs when workers' earnings reach the minimum wage, after which there is no reduction in basic augmentation to set off against bonus augmentation. This is not at present common enough to be of practical importance, but it could be if new trades were introduced with the present wages system.

166. Because of the low starting points in most of these bonus schemes, it seems likely that they have often increased remuneration without securing a corresponding increase in production, and may well, therefore, have increased the cost of providing employment. It sometimes happens that blind workers are getting a total remuneration greater than that of sighted workers, with a larger output, on similar work in ordinary industry. The survey officers estimated that if a scheme on the lines usual in the provinces were operating in a London workshop which they visited, the cost of employment at existing levels of output would be £1 higher per head per week than at present.

167. At one workshop the economic advantages of the introduction of new trades and processes have been largely nullified, from the point of view of the cost of providing employment, by the bonus scheme, which pays a 66⅔ per cent. bonus from starting points which have been allowed to remain at more or less the same levels in the new trades as in the old, where earnings are much harder to come by.

168. It is very doubtful whether the more uneconomic bonus schemes would ever have been introduced were it not that the cost is recorded as "augmentation", does not, therefore, appear in the trading accounts, is not taken into account by workshop managements in estimating costs of production, and in the case of a voluntary workshop is usually borne by the local authority.

169. We conclude, therefore, that bonus schemes of the kind described provide only a very expensive and ineffective answer to the problems of the disincentive effect of the augmentation system of wage payments; and that the system itself needs radical re-casting.

Other Disadvantages of the Augmentation System

170. The system has other drawbacks besides the lack of incentive to the workers. One is that it obscures to managers and management committees the true relative cost of providing employment in different departments of a workshop. This comes about because it is the customary practice, when comparing the economic efficiency of various departments within a workshop, to have regard only to the trading accounts, in which "earnings" are shown but "augmentation" is excluded. When visiting workshops, we often heard a manager

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

say that his basket or brush department was more "profitable" than bedding, because the "trading loss" was higher in the latter, although the augmentation payments were much smaller (because of higher earnings by the workers) and so the true net cost of providing employment was lower. If all payments to workers were set down as wages managements would become more aware of the total costs of providing employment, and would know whether one department was genuinely more profitable than another; this would be of assistance in deciding which departments should be developed and which eventually relinquished.

171. Another drawback is that local authorities may feel that they have discharged their responsibility to voluntary workshops by meeting the cost of the augmentation payments. There is a danger that such authorities may take little interest in the trading efficiency of the workshops and be unsympathetic to requests for help with new developments.

172. An even greater difficulty (mentioned by many witnesses including those of the National League) is that the system cannot be fairly and sensibly applied in new trades, where there are no nationally agreed piece rates. In such cases the proportion of the wage packet to be treated as "earnings" may become a matter of dispute between a voluntary workshop and the local authority, which is no encouragement to introduce new trades. Even where there is no such dispute, the amount put down as a worker's "earnings", whether calculated on a piece rate or time basis, is inevitably somewhat arbitrary and unrealistic.

173. The problem of reform would be simpler if it were the practice here, as in some other countries, to pay every blind person a pension in addition to whatever he may earn, but no such provision has yet been adopted in this country. In default of a general pension for the blind, some witnesses suggested a return to the system, which was often found before the war, of a fixed amount of augmentation, in addition to all "earnings". This would certainly remove the disincentive effect of the present arrangements, since all payments for work done would then give an addition to take-home pay. But in view of the wide range of earnings in the present trades, the even wider differences in earnings between old and new trades, and the varying abilities of the workers, a system of fixed augmentation would have substantial disadvantages. If the amount were fixed so as to bring the remuneration of the lowest earners up to a reasonable level it would be extravagant of public money as applied to workers able to earn more: whereas if it were fixed in relation to the earnings of the latter those equally industrious but less capable, or engaged on less remunerative work, would have insufficient remuneration to meet their needs. We understand that it was for such reasons that the system of fixed augmentation had been generally abandoned by workshops even before the adoption of the present practice of augmentation up to the level of municipal wages. Further, the introduction of fixed augmentation, which would of course be tax free, would discourage the transfer of the more competent workers from workshops to open employment, which we consider desirable (see paragraph 70). It might be particularly unfortunate to introduce a system of fixed augmentation just as the workshops have at last the chance to move away from the old handcraft trades, where almost every blind worker needs a subsidy, to new trades in which many blind workers can aspire to earnings comparable with those in sighted industry.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

174. This is not to say that we think the workshops are ever likely to be fully self-supporting, even if the traditional crafts eventually disappear. We have already recommended that their role should be to cater for blind people who, for one reason or another, cannot be placed in ordinary employment, including those whose working capacity, even in new trades, may be only 50 per cent. of sighted workers. If so some subsidy will always be necessary. However, an individual subsidy identifiable in respect of each worker, whether varying in proportion to output or fixed, has inevitable defects. No such system has ever been thought necessary in Remploy factories or other grant-aided workshops for the sighted disabled, some of which are described in Appendix 13. In these, all payments to workers are recorded as wages and are liable to income tax; financial assistance whether from central or local government, takes the form of contributions to the general costs of the workshops, not of subsidies to individuals. We consider that the same arrangement should be adopted for workshops for the blind.

175. This would mean an entirely new wages structure. Its determination is a matter for the parties concerned, and we later recommend (see paragraphs 180–184) that it should be undertaken by a National Joint Industrial Council. It may be helpful, however, if we set out the basic principles which in our view it should follow.

176. There should be a basic weekly wage, subject to income tax in the normal way. Ideally, this should be high enough to ensure that the blind worker is better off in sheltered employment than if unemployed and on National Assistance. This is a matter of some difficulty in the minority of cases where the worker has heavy family responsibilities. The blind get an addition of 22s. 6d.* weekly to the payments of Assistance allowances to which they would otherwise be entitled; and it is possible for a man with a family of two or more children to receive more in Assistance than the present workshop "minimum wage". To fix the general level of workshop wages high enough to prevent any individual ever being worse off than on National Assistance might mean that they were above those usual in ordinary industry and would certainly mean a subsidy at a level no Government is likely to contemplate. The solution might be the incorporation in the wages structure of some system of family allowances, and we suggest that this possibility be examined by the J.I.C.

177. We believe that the provision of some bonus payment, over and above a basic wage, as a reward for extra output or effort, is desirable in workshops for the blind. Where this can satisfactorily be directly related to the output of the individual, we are in favour of an individual output bonus. In some new trades which may be introduced this may well be difficult, and we would then recommend the consideration of some system of merit rating or, alternatively, group bonus. Details of bonus systems will have to be fixed locally with the help of advice from the Corporation, within the new wages structure negotiated by the J.I.C. In all cases careful study should precede the introduction of any such scheme to ensure that an adequate incentive is introduced, without such extravagance that the additional output costs more than the value of the goods produced or that the result is to give blind workers higher weekly remuneration

---

* 24s. 6d. from 24th September, 1962

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

than sighted workers with a larger output on similar work in outside industry. We do not in any event regard the introduction of incentive schemes as a substitute for good management.

178. Our views on wages are summed up as follows:

Recommendation No. 18

(a) The existing wage system based on a division of each worker's take-home pay into "earnings" and "augmentation" should be replaced by a system under which all payments to workers are treated as wages.

(b) The objectives of such a system should be:

(i) to provide a reasonable basic wage for all blind workers so that they are at least better off than on National Assistance;

(ii) to give some incentive to produce a reasonable output by offering a chance to earn more than the basic wage.

179. We were glad to learn of the Government's recent decision (in June, 1962) to provide a £100 income tax allowance for registered blind persons. We welcome this concession on its merits, and also because it will reduce the difficulty of moving from the present wages system in the workshops, with its large tax-free element, to a new system without any such element.

PROPOSED JOINT INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

180. We believe there would be considerable advantages in the setting up of a National Joint Industrial Council to deal with wages and conditions of service of blind workers in workshops for the blind. Its first task would be to establish the new wages structure. The elimination of the "augmentation" element from the remuneration of blind workers would remove the obstacle that has long prevented the establishment of such a body in England and Wales—namely the view held by local authority associations that "augmentation", being a welfare or gratuitous payment, could not be subject to ordinary industrial negotiation.

181. The J.I.C. should be on the usual pattern, with employers' and workers' representatives. In the particular circumstances of the workshops for the blind we think there should, as in some other J.I.Cs., be an independent chairman, who could act as conciliator in the case of dispute between the two sides. The employers' side should consist of nominees from the local authority associations, the N.A.W.B., and the Corporation, which must obviously have a voice in determination of wages. It is important that a substantial proportion of the employers' representatives should be actual workshop managers. The workers' side should probably be composed initially entirely of representatives of the National League of the Blind; later it might be necessary to provide at least one seat for a representative of the severely disabled sighted workers employed in workshops for the blind, whose numbers are rapidly increasing.

182. Once the J.I.C. was set up the Local Authorities' Advisory Committee would not appear to be required, nor would the separate Scottish J.I.C. This, however, might continue as a committee of the main J.I.C., if this were found desirable to deal with the application of the new national agreements in Scotland.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

183. Another reason for the establishment of a J.I.C. is that it is of great importance that the policies of the Corporation and of managements and the reasons for those policies, should be fully understood by the workers, and that managements should have the advantage of the views of workers on their proposals. We believe that, properly constituted, the National Joint Industrial Council could provide a useful link for this exchange of information, ideas and views, and could contribute much to the smooth development of progressive plans for bringing workshops for the blind more closely into line with modern industrial developments.

184. We therefore recommend:

Recommendation No. 19

A Joint Industrial Council for Workshops for the Blind should be established, covering the whole of Great Britain.

185. We have made no recommendation about the method of determining wages and conditions of supervisory staff and able bodied sighted workers, who may not be covered by the J.I.C.; but this will require consideration.

FUTURE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND VOLUNTARY WORKSHOPS

186. If the augmentation system comes to an end, a new basis will be needed for financial assistance from local authorities to workshops run by voluntary organisations used by the authorities as their agents. Such a basis has already been found for the few workshops for the sighted disabled which act as agents for local authorities. An example is LuDun Ltd. (described in Appendix 13), a workshop in Luton which is run by a voluntary organisation on behalf of the Bedfordshire County Council. Here the workers are paid normal wages: and financial help from the local authority takes the form of contributions towards capital expenditure, plus an annual contribution in respect of each severely disabled employee, calculated so as to meet the larger part of the workshop's losses. Such a basis of financial support would be equally appropriate to the workshops for the blind, once a new wages structure had been agreed. It might well result in local authorities taking a closer interest in the efficiency of workshop management, and in the possibilities of new developments, than they have done in the past. It would not in any case be entirely new, as some local authorities already pay contributions towards trading losses as well as meeting the cost of augmentation payments. We accordingly recommend:

Recommendation No. 20

Local authority financial support of voluntary workshops should in future take the form of help with capital expenditure and also a per capita annual contribution towards the cost of providing employment, periodically negotiated in the light of trading results.

(C) THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT IS PRACTICABLE AND DESIRABLE TO COMBINE THE PROVISION OF SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT FOR THE BLIND WITH SIMILAR PROVISION FOR OTHER SERIOUSLY DISABLED PERSONS

187. We formed the opinion, from our visits to workshops and from other evidence, that the introduction of sighted disabled people in need of sheltered

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

employment into workshops for the blind would bring the workshops considerable new problems, quite apart from the special difficulties discussed below which may soon be overcome. Nevertheless no organisation or individual workshop was opposed to the idea in principle and some were already putting it into operation.

188. It is widely held that it should be easier to introduce new trades for the blind into workshops employing both blind and sighted disabled. It was however disappointing to note that this had rarely been done. This confirms our view that the real obstacles to modernising the workshops for the blind are, not the composition of the labour force, but tradition and the system of local control. From experience abroad and in a few workshops here it seems clear that it is not necessary to have mixed workshops in order to introduce modern methods of production, though it might well make the transition easier.

189. We were interested to note that in the Netherlands the long-established workshops for the blind are in process of being integrated into the recently developed national system of sheltered workshops for disabled people of all types, and that as a result it is hoped gradually to eliminate traditional trades as the older workers retire, by putting new blind recruits on to some of the industrial work undertaken by sighted disabled people in the same workshop. Workshops for the blind are unlikely to develop in the same way in this country, if they remain, as we have recommended they should, a responsibility of local authorities, which play only a limited part in the provision of sheltered employment for other disabled people. Where, however, local authorities are proposing to meet a need for more sheltered employment for the disabled generally we consider that the obvious course, for reasons of economy and efficiency, would be to provide for the blind and sighted disabled in the same undertaking, especially if the workshop for the blind has some vacant space or if it has in any case to be rebuilt. We know that some local authorities are proceeding on these lines and we hope there will be more such developments.

190. One difficulty hitherto has been the question of wages. The payment of the sighted disabled at the Portsmouth workshop (see paragraph 36) at Remploy rates, lower than the blind "minimum wage", has naturally led to discontent and friction between blind and sighted workers. The local authority regard this situation as the sole difficulty about the scheme, which in all other respects—including personal relations between the blind and the sighted disabled—is said to be working well. In workshops where the sighted disabled are a local authority responsibility, they are usually paid on the same basis as the blind (including the division into "earnings" and "augmentation"), but some authorities have been reluctant to apply the wages system operating in workshops for the blind fully to the sighted disabled. They have, for example, augmented their earnings up to a lower "minimum wage", or excluded them from the incentive bonus scheme, with resulting discontent. This reluctance may have inhibited the development of combined workshops. If the wages structure is changed as we have suggested, this difficulty will be removed.

191. Another difficulty mentioned by witnesses is a tendency on the part of local authority welfare departments to put forward for admission to the workshops sighted disabled people on the border line of employability. This has made some workshop managers understandably nervous of any wider admission of sighted disabled persons. It is undesirable that lower standards of admission should be applied to the sighted disabled than to the blind, where they are to be employed side by side in the same workshop.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

192. We therefore recommend:

Recommendation No. 21

Where there is need for the provision of sheltered employment for sighted disabled persons by a local authority this provision should where possible be combined with provision for the blind.

Recommendation No. 22

Any sighted disabled person admitted to a workshop for the blind should be required to reach and sustain at least the level of output expected of the blind on similar work.

Recommendation No. 23

Once a reformed wages structure has been introduced it should be applied to all sighted disabled workers in the workshops who are the responsibility of local authorities, equally with the blind.

CONCLUDING NOTE

193. In concluding this Report we should like to express our warm appreciation of the devoted and patient labours of our very efficient secretary, Mr. Arthur Wilson, and of the help given by his assistants Miss E. E. D. Taylor, Miss E. Read and Mrs. I. I. Sigsworth, who have dealt with the great volume of paper and done so much for our convenience and comfort during our many meetings, visits and journeys. We should also like to make particular mention of the excellent work done by Mr. K. F. Swinfen and Mr. J. N. Slinn, whose report of their survey of workshops was invaluable in helping us to reach our conclusions. We are also indebted to Mr. A. A. D'Encer, an Assistant Accountant General of the Ministry of Labour, who attended most of our meetings and whose advice and interest were very helpful.

(*Signed*) James G. Stewart (*Chairman*)
E. M. Amphlett
C. H. Beckett
A. Brown
J. C. Colligan
R. A. Joseph
Dorothy M. Kent
May O'Conor
W. H. Pascoe
T. H. Smith

A. E. Wilson, *Secretary*

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 1

LIST OF ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO SUBMITTED EVIDENCE

The following bodies or individuals have submitted evidence to us orally or in writing or both. Those marked with a single asterisk gave written evidence only; those marked with a double asterisk gave oral evidence only.

All Russia Society for the Blind, represented by:
Mr. A. Kwitko
Mr. B. Zimin

Association of County Councils in Scotland, represented by:
Mr. A. Cunningham
Mr. W. T. Dundas
Mr. F. Inglis

*Association of Directors of Welfare Services

Association of Municipal Corporations, represented by:
Sir Harold Banwell, K.B.E.
Mr. C. J. Berry
Mr. E. Haines
Alderman A. E. Hobson, J.P.
Mr. C. H. Pollard, C.B.E.
Mr. S. J. Welsman

*Birmingham Royal Institution for the Blind

*A blind worker (anonymous) in a Workshop for the Blind

*Carlisle and District Productivity Committee
(Report on a survey carried out at the Cumberland and Westmorland Home and Workshops for the Blind, Carlisle.)

**Mr. E. Chase (Production Engineering Research Association)

**Mr. C. J. W. Cole (Messrs. Urwick, Orr and Partners Limited, Managerial Consultants.)

College of Teachers of the Blind (Craft Instructors' Examining Board) represented by:
Mr. F. Burville
Mr. E. H. Getliff, O.B.E.
Mr. B. Jelfs
Mr. S. O. Myers
Miss M. Saunders
Mr. A. E. Whiston

*Convention of Royal Burghs, Edinburgh

County Councils Association, represented by:
Mr. H. Bargh
Mrs. G. Buxton, C.B.E.
Mr. H. Harrison
Mr. M. G. McKenzie, M.B.E.

(5299) C

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Joint Committee of the London Workshops for the Blind, represented by:
Mr. A. W. Cooper, M.B.E.
Mr. C. J. Godfrey
Mr. G. C. Haines
Mr. E. G. Rawlings

Joint Industrial Council for Scottish Workshops for the Blind, represented by:
Mr. F. W. Hobby
Mr. R. Milne
Mr. I. A. Smith
Mr. A. Williams

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Labour

*National Assistance Board

National Association of Workshops for the Blind Incorporated, represented by:
Mr. B. Illingworth
Mr. C. Noble
Mr. C. C. Webb

National Federation of the Blind of the United Kingdom, represented by:
Mr. Cambray Jones

National League of the Blind, represented by:
Mr. R. Laurie
Mr. E. F. Mears
Mr. T. Smith

North Regional Association for the Blind, represented by:
Alderman E. A. Dickinson
Alderman N. Garrow, O.B.E., J.P.
Alderman R. S. Oloman, M.B.E., J.P.
Mr. W. P. Swann

*Mr. R. D. Purser, Secretary and Superintendent of the Northamptonshire Town and County Association for the Blind.

Remploy Limited, represented by:
Mr. T. Doyle
Mr. S. Green, C.B.E.
Mr. R. T. Lambert
Mr. B. J. Marshall
Mr. D. R. Molloy

Royal National Institute for the Blind, represented by:
Mr. F. J. Humphery
Mr. E. Turner
Mr. E. J. Venn
Mr. H. Wilson

Scottish Counties of Cities Association, represented by:
Councillor J. Davis
Councillor D. Drummond Young
Mr. D. W. Maclean
Councillor Miss E. M. Mein
Councillor W. S. Miller
Mr. T. Tinto

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

*Scottish Education Department

Scottish National Federation for the Welfare of the Blind, represented by:
Mr. J. Cormack, M.B.E.
Mr. W. Lewis
Mr. T. Paterson
Mr. D. Pollock-Smith, J.P.
Mr. W. H. Smith
Mr. A. G. Vallance

*Scottish National Institution for the War Blinded

Mr. W. P. Swann, Principal, Yorkshire School for the Blind.

Workshops for the Blind

*Aberdeen	Royal Asylum for the Blind
*Barnsley	County Borough Council
*Birmingham	City Council

Bristol Royal Workshops for the Blind, represented by:
Mr. J. Crampton
Mr. E. H. Getliff, O.B.E.

*Dundee	Royal Institution for the Blind
*Edinburgh	Royal Blind Asylum and School
*Glasgow	Royal Asylum for the Blind
*Halifax	County Borough Council

Hull and East Riding Institution for the Blind, represented by:
Mr. W. O. Honor
Mr. J. A. Platt
Mr. G. Robinson, C.B.E., M.C. (since deceased)

*Inverness	Northern Counties Institute for the Blind
*Ipswich	County Borough Council
*Leeds	City Council
*Liverpool	Catholic Blind Institute
*Newcastle-on-Tyne	Workshops for the Adult Blind
Portsmouth	City of Portsmouth Welfare Services Committee, represented by: Mr. H. N. Schrader Mr. A. E. Wintle
*Sheffield	Public Health Department
*Warrington	County Borough Council

*Yorkshire School for the Blind

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 2

TABLES SHOWING COMPARISON BETWEEN THE NUMBERS OF PERSONS REGISTERED AS BLIND AND THOSE IN EMPLOYMENT AT THE TIME OF THE REPORTS OF THE TOMLINSON COMMITTEE, THE WORKING PARTY ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF BLIND PERSONS, THE PIERCY COMMITTEE AND THE LATEST REGISTRATION YEAR.

TABLE A

Great Britain

Year Ended	Total Register (1)			Working age range 16–64 (2)			Employed: Workshops for the Blind (3)			Employed: Homeworkers Schemes (4)			Employed: Other occupations including professioos (5)			Employed: Total in Employment (cols. 3, 4 and 5) (6)			Employed: Approximate perceotage of those of working age who were in employment (7)		
	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total
31st March, 1941 (Tomlinsoo Report)	*	*	83,407	*	*	40,507	*	*	4,354	*	*	1,783	*	*	2,994	*	*	9,131	*	*	22%
31st March, 1949 (Report of Working Party on Employment)	40,856	46,319	87,175	20,180	17,042	37,222	3,068	900	3,968	1,064	455	1,519	4,054	863	4,917	8,186	2,218	10,404	40%	13%	28%
31st December, 1955 (31st March, 1955 for Scottish figures) (Piercy Report)	45,213	59,212	104,425	19,260	17,095	36,355	3,009	833	3,842	911	401	1,312	5,212	1,162	6,374	9,132	2,396	11,528	47½%	14%	32%
31st December, 1960 (31st March, 1961 for Scottish figures)	44,262	63,133	107,395	18,203	16,018	34,221	2,947	726	3,673	803	342	1,145	5,277	1,320	6,597	9,027	2,388	11,415	50%	15%	33%

* Details not available.

TABLE B

England and Wales

Year Ended	Total Register (1)			Working age range 16–64 (2)			Employed: Workshops for the Blind (3)			Employed: Homeworkers Schemes (4)			Employed: Other occupations including professions (5)			Employed: Total in Employment (cols. 3, 4 and 5) (6)			Employed: Approximate percentage of those of working age who were in employment (7)		
	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total
31st March, 1941 (Tomlinson Report)	*	*	74,524	*	*	35,592	*	*	3,581	*	*	1,686	*	*	2,679	*	*	7,946	—	—	22%
31st March, 1949 (Report of Working Party on Employment)	36,464	42,115	78,579	17,843	15,231	33,074	2,469	761	3,230	1,007	446	1,453	3,839	814	4,653	7,315	2,021	9,336	41%	13%	28%
31st December, 1955 (Piercy Report)	40,698	53,985	94,683	17,108	15,266	32,374	2,410	698	3,108	873	395	1,268	4,999	1,120	6,119	8,282	2,213	10,495	48½%	14½%	32½%
31st December, 1960	39,965	57,504	97,469	16,229	14,227	30,456	2,342	616	2,958	774	338	1,112	5,015	1,222	6,237	8,131	2,176	10,307	50%	15%	33½%

* Details not available.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

TABLE C

Scotland

Year Ended	Total Register (1)			Working age range 16–64 (2)			Employed: Workshops for the Blind (3)			Employed: Homeworkers Schemes (4)			Employed: Other occupations including professions (5)			Employed: Total in Employment (cols. 3, 4 and 5) (6)			Employed: Approximate percentage of those of working age who were in employment (7)		
	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total	M	W	Total
31st March, 1941 (Tomlinson Report)	4,570	4,313	8,883	2,777	2,138	4,915	609	164	773	78	19	97	236	79	315	923	262	1,185	33%	12%	24%
				Estimated																	
31st March, 1949 (Report of Working Party on Employment)	4,392	4,204	8,596	2,337	1,811	4,148	599	139	738	57	9	66	215	49	264	871	197	1,068	37%	11%	26%
				Estimated																	
31st March, 1955 (Piercy Report)	4,515	5,227	9,742	2,152	1,829	3,981	599	135	734	38	6	44	213	42	255	850	183	1,033	40%	10%	26%
31st March, 1961	4,297	5,629	9,926	1,974	1,791	3,765	605	110	715	29	4	33	262	98	360	896	212	1,108	45%	12%	29½%

Appendix 3

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN

This statement shows the names and addresses of the 67 approved Workshops for the blind in Great Britain graded according to Ministry of Labour administrative regions and gives information about the numbers of blind men and women who were in training or employment in the various departments at 31st May, 1960.

The cost symbols in column (2) relate to the following four ranges of net per capita cost of providing employment, i.e. the trading loss plus augmentation, per blind or other severely disabled worker employed, during the year ended 31st March, 1959:

A—£201 to £300

B—£301 to £400

C—£401 to £500

D—over £500

These are taken from the accounts submitted by the workshops to the Ministry of Labour. The average per capita cost for all workshops in the same year was £436.

In column (3) the abbreviations "L.A." and "Vol." have been used to denote "Local Authority" and "Voluntary Organisation" respectively.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
ENGLAND																				
Northern Region (Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmorland and the North Riding of Yorkshire)																				
(1) Cleveland and South Durham Institute for the Blind, Newport, Middlesbrough, Yorks.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	9	—	9	1	—	1	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Brushes ..	21	—	21	4	—	4	25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	6	6	—	2	2	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Mats ..	9	—	9	1	—	1	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Wirework ..	9	—	9	1	—	1	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Maintenance Joiners ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Caretaker's Assistant ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Travelling ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	52	6	58	7	2	9	67	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	67	15	82
(2) Cumberland and Westmorland Home and Workshops for the Blind, Petteril Bank Road, Harraby, Carlisle.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	6		
			Bedding & Upholstery	7	—	7	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Brushes ..	4	—	4	1	—	1	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Chair-caning	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Firewood ..	7	—	7	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Piano Tuning	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Watch & Clock Repairing	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	1		
			Typing ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	1		
			Totals ..	24	5	29	1	—	1	30	1	1	2	1	—	1	3	33	18	51
(3) Hartlepools Workshops for the Blind, Avenue Road, West Hartlepool.	A	Vol.	Baskets ..	6	—	6	1	—	1	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Firewood ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Mats ..	5	—	5	1	—	1	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Totals ..	13	—	13	2	—	2	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	6	21

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(4) Sunderland and Durham County Incorporated Royal Institution for the Blind, 12 Borough Road, Sunderland.	D	Vol.	Baskets ..	19	—	19	1	—	1	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20		
			Bedding ..	18	5	23	—	—	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23		
			Brushes ..	13	—	13	1	—	1	14	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	15		
			Chair-caning	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Mats ..	13	—	13	—	—	—	13	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	14		
			Porters ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	65	9	74	2	—	2	76	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	78	22	100
(5) Workshops for the Adult Blind, Whickham View, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 5.	B	L.A.	Baskets ..	31	—	31	2	—	2	33	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	33		
			Bedding ..	26	2	28	—	—	—	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	28		
			Brushes ..	22	—	22	—	—	—	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22		
			Chair-caning	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Firewood ..	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Mats ..	16	—	16	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16		
			Ships' Fendoffs ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Labouring ..	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Totals ..	110	9	119	2	—	2	121	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	121	22	143
Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Region (excluding the North Riding of Yorkshire)																				
(6) City of Leeds Blind Welfare Department, 79 Roundhay Road, Leeds, 8.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	19	—	19	—	—	—	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19		
			Bedding ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Brushes ..	20	4	24	—	—	—	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24		
			Chair-caning	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	5		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	7	7	—	1	1	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Mats ..	13	—	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Piano Tuning	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Wirework ..	9	2	11	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Totals ..	67	14	81	—	1	1	82	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	83	28	111

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(7) City of Sheffield Welfare of the Blind Department, 284 Sharrow Lane, Sheffield 11.	D	L.A.	Baskets ..	13	—	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Brushes ..	21	—	21	—	—	—	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21		
			Boot & Shoe Repairs ..	9	—	9	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9		
			Chair-caning	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	13	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Mats ..	11	—	11	3	—	3	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Weaving ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Labouring ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	55	17	72	3	—	3	75	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	75	37	112
(8) City of Wakefield Workshop for the Blind, 128 Northgate, Wakefield, Yorks.	C	L.A.	Chair-caning	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Totals ..	1	3	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	2	6
(9) County Borough of Barnsley Blind Welfare Workshop, 39 Pitt Street, Barnsley, Yorks.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	5	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Totals ..	1	5	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	1	7
(10) Halifax Corporation Workshops for the Blind, Skircoat Moor Road, Savile Park, Halifax.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	11	—	11	1	—	1	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Chair-caning	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Mats ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Mops ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	18	4	22	1	—	1	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23	4	27
(11) Huddersfield Workshop for the Blind, Southgate, Huddersfield.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	7	—	7	1	—	1	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	5	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Mats ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Handyman ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Gardener's Assistant ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	1		
			Totals ..	9	5	14	1	—	1	15	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	16	6	22

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind							Severely Disabled Sighted							Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
				Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees	Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees			
				M	W	Total	M	W	Total		M	W	Total	M	W	Total				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(12) Hull and East Riding Institute for the Blind, Beech Holme, Beverley Road, Hull.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	21	—	21	1	—	1	22	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	23		
			Brushes ..	18	2	20	2	—	2	22	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	23		
			Chair-caning	23	—	23	—	—	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23		
			Machine Knitting ..	4	12	16	—	1	1	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17		
			Mats ..	16	—	16	1	—	1	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17		
			Piano Tuning	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Woodwork ..	11	—	11	1	—	1	12	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	13		
			Labouring ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Packing ..	1	1	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Shop Assistant ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Travelling Sales Organisers	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	98	16	114	5	1	6	120	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	123	45	168
(13) Institution for the Blind of Dewsbury, Batley and District, 87 Daisy Hill, Dewsbury, Yorks.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	16	—	16	1	—	1	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17		
			Chair-caning	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Mops ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Travelling ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	19	4	23	1	—	1	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24	9	33
(14) Royal Institution for the Blind, Frizinghall, Bradford.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	20	—	20	3	—	3	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23		
			Bedding & Upholstery	11	—	11	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	12		
			Brushes ..	29	—	29	2	—	2	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	31		
			Chair-caning	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	13	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Mats ..	12	—	12	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Totals ..	72	15	87	5	—	5	92	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	93	39	132

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(15) Yorkshire School for the Blind, The King's Manor House, York.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	15	—	15	2	—	2	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17		
			Brushes ..	12	1	13	1	—	1	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	2	2	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Mats ..	5	—	5	2	—	2	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Totals ..	32	5	37	5	2	7	44	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	44	15	59
(16) Lindsey Blind Society, Cole Street, Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire.	A	Vol.	Baskets ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Brushes ..	7	—	7	2	—	2	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9		
			Totals ..	12	—	12	2	—	2	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	6	20
Eastern and Southern Region (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, part of Essex, Huntingdonshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire.)																				
(17) Incorporated Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, County Workshops for the Blind, Leicester Road, Luton.	A	Vol.	Baskets ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Brushes ..	10	—	10	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Soap ..	9	5	14	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Porter ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	22	5	27	—	—	—	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27	8	35
(18) Ipswich Workshops for the Blind, 18–22 Granville Street, Ipswich.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Brushes ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Chair-caning	1	1	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Firewood ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	5	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Mats ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Labouring ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Foreman ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	17	6	23	—	—	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23	6	29
(19) Norwich Institution for the Blind, 132 Magdalen Street, Norwich.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	33	—	33	1	—	1	34	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	34		
			Brushes ..	17	—	17	—	—	—	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	16	16	—	1	1	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17		
			Mats ..	13	—	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Firewood ..	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Totals ..	67	16	83	1	1	2	85	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	85	28	113

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind							Severely Disabled Sighted							Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
				Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees	Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees			
				M	W	Total	M	W	Total		M	W	Total	M	W	Total				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(20) City of Oxford Workshop for the Blind, Red Barn, Woodstock Road, Oxford.	D	L.A.	Chair-caning	1	1	2	—	—	—	2	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	3		
			Mats ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	3	1	4	—	—	—	4	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	5	5	10
(21) City of Portsmouth Workshop for the Disabled, Northern Road, Cosham, Portsmouth.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	13	—	13	—	—	—	13	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	18		
			Boot & Shoe Repairs ..	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	9		
			Brushes ..	18	2	20	2	—	2	22	10	—	10	—	—	—	10	32		
			Chair-caning	—	2	2	1	—	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	10	10	—	—	—	10	7	2	9	—	—	—	9	19		
			Mats ..	9	—	9	—	—	—	9	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	14		
			Piano Tuning	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Radio Repairing	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	2	5	—	—	—	5	5		
			Totals ..	46	14	60	3	—	3	63	35†	4†	39†	—	—	—	39†	102	22	124
London and South Eastern Region (London (Administrative County), Middlesex, part of Essex, Surrey and Sussex.)																				
(22) Barclay Workshop for Blind Women and other Disabled Persons, 31 Wellington Road, Brighton.	A	Vol.	Machine Knitting ..	—	10	10	—	—	—	10	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	12		
			Weaving ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Finishers ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	2		
			Totals ..	—	11	11	—	—	—	11	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	15	6	21
(23) County Borough of West Ham, Municipal Workshops for the Blind, 128 West Ham Lane, Stratford, London, E.15.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	10	—	10	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Bedding ..	9	1	10	2	—	2	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Brushes ..	17	—	17	—	—	—	17	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	18		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Mats ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			General ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Stores ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	44	3	47	2	—	2	49	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	50	12	62

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.
† Under special arrangement with Remploy Ltd.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(24) Incorporated Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind, 257–8 Tottenham Court Road, London, W.1.	A	Vol.	Baskets ..	24	—	24	2	—	2	26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26		
			Bedding & Upholstery	21	8	29	5	1	6	35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	35		
			Chair-caning	1	7	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Porters ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			General ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Telephonist	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Shorthand Typists ..	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	54	17	71	7	1	8	79	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	79	47	126
(25) London Association for the Blind, Pelican House, 88–92 Peckham Road, London, S.E.15.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	25	—	25	3	—	3	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	28		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	28	28	—	2	2	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30		
			Plastics ..	19	1	20	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20		
			Telephonist	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Shorthand Typist ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Machine Operating	—	—	—	2	—	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	45	30	75	5	2	7	82	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	82	86	168
(26) Royal London Society for the Blind, 105–109 Salusbury Road, London, N.W.6.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	48	—	48	1	—	1	49	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	49		
			Bedding ..	9	1	10	2	—	2	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Boot & Shoe Repairs ..	22	—	22	—	—	—	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22		
			Chair-caning	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	35	35	—	1	1	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	36		
			Totals ..	82	36	118	3	1	4	122	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	122	83	205
(27) Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead, Surrey.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	9	—	9	4	—	4	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Brushes ..	15	—	15	3	—	3	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	18		
			Machine Knitting	—	20	20	—	1	1	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21		
			Mats ..	1	—	1	2	—	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Totals ..	25	20	45	9	1	10	55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	55	32	87

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind							Severely Disabled Sighted							Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
				Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees	Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees			
				M	W	Total	M	W	Total		M	W	Total	M	W	Total				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(28) Royal School for the Blind, London Workshop, 246–260 Waterloo Road, London, S.E.1.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	34	—	34	4	—	4	38	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	38		
			Brushes ..	25	—	25	2	—	2	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27		
			Mats ..	21	—	21	2	—	2	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23		
			Totals ..	80	—	80	8	—	8	88	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	88	15	103
(29) Workshop for the Blind, 166 Greenwich High Road, Greenwich, London, S.E.10.	D	L.A.	Baskets ..	19	—	19	1	—	1	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20		
			Bedding ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Ships' Fendoffs ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Totals ..	31	—	31	1	—	1	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	32	12	44
South Western Region (Cornwall, Devon, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Wiltshire, Dorset.)																				
(30) Bristol Royal Workshops for the Blind, St. George's Road, Park Street, Bristol, 1.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	30	—	30	2	—	2	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	32		
			Chair-caning	3	2	5	—	1	1	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	10	10	—	1	1	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Light Engineering	10	—	10	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Mats ..	13	—	13	1	—	1	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Weaving ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Soft toys ..	1	1	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	57	17	74	3	2	5	79	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	79	26	105
(31) South Devon and Cornwall Institution for the Blind, North Hill, Plymouth.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Mats ..	11	—	11	1	—	1	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Ships' Fendoffs ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	20	1	21	1	—	1	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	9	31

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(32) City of Exeter Workshops for the Blind, Kalendarhay, Cathedral Close, Exeter.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	12	—	12	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Chair-caning	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Mats ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Coat Hanger Making ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	3		
			Labouring ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	1		
			Sales ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	17	—	17	—	—	—	17	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	20	3	23
Midlands Region																				
(Hereford, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland.)																				
(33) City of Birmingham Workshops for the Blind, 62 Woodville Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	18	—	18	6	—	6	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24		
			Bedding & Upholstery	14	5	19	—	—	—	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19		
			Boot & Shoe Repairs ..	9	—	9	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9		
			Brushes ..	58	12	70	3	1	4	74	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	74		
			Chair-caning	—	13	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Light Engineering	29	13	42	—	—	—	42	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	42		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	20	20	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20		
			Mats ..	11	—	11	3	—	3	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Coal Bags ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Piano Tuning ..	16	—	16	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16		
			Labouring ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Warehouse	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			General ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	165	63	228	12	1	13	241	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	241	50	291

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind							Severely Disabled Sighted							Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
				Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees	Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees			
				M	W	Total	M	W	Total		M	W	Total	M	W	Total				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(34) City of Stoke-on-Trent Workshops for the Blind, City Road, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	17	6	23	—	—	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23		
			Bedding & Upholstery	12	2	14	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Brushes ..	16	—	16	1	—	1	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	8	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Mats ..	10	—	10	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Piano Repairs ..	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Wirework ..	9	—	9	2	—	2	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Labouring ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Pottery ..	—	6	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Typing ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	1		
			Totals ..	67	22	89	4	—	4	93	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	94	34	128
(35) Northamptonshire Town and County Association for the Blind, 21–25 Gray Street, Northampton.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	7	—	7	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Brushes ..	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Chair-caning	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Mats ..	5	—	5	2	—	2	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Soap ..	4	6	10	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Totals ..	24	12	36	2	—	2	38	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	38	20	58
(36) Royal Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Incorporated Institution for the Blind, 50 Granby Street, Leicester.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	27	3	30	—	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30		
			Boot & Shoe Repairs ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Brushes ..	10	—	10	4	—	4	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Cardboard Boxes ..	14	6	20	1	1	2	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22		
			Chair-caning	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Firewood ..	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Mats ..	11	—	11	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Cleaning ..	1	1	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Canteen ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	77	19	96	5	1	6	102	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	102	22	124

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(37) Royal Midland Institution for the Blind, Chaucer Street, Nottingham.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	18	—	18	3	—	3	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21		
			Brushes ..	27	1	28	—	—	—	28	3	—	3	1	—	1	4	32		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Mats ..	11	—	11	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Totals ..	56	5	61	3	—	3	64	3	—	3	1	—	1	4	68	31	99
(38) Walsall County Borough and Staffordshire County Council Institute and Workshops for the Blind, Hatherton Road, Walsall, Staffs.	D	L.A.	Baskets ..	10	—	10	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Brushes ..	16	—	16	5	—	5	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21		
			Chair-caning	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	1	1	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Mats ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Cleaning ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Shop Assistant	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	30	6	36	5	1	6	42	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	42	13	55
(39) Wolverhampton, Dudley and Districts Institute for the Blind, 62 Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	15	5	20	2	—	2	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22		
			Brushes ..	11	—	11	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Chair-caning	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Mechanical Department (Includes: Light Assembly Inspection Carpentry Mop Making)	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	12	12	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Mats ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Miscellaneous Workers: Canvasser ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Mess Room Attendant	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Porters & Labourers	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	43	19	62	2	—	2	64	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	64	24	88

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind							Severely Disabled Sighted							Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
				Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees	Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees			
				M	W	Total	M	W	Total		M	W	Total	M	W	Total				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
North Western Region (Cheshire and Lancashire.)																				
(40) Accrington and District Institution for the Blind and Prevention of Blindness, 32 Bank Street, Accrington, Lancs.	B	Vol.	Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	5	9
(41) Blackburn Workshops for the Blind, Mill Hill Street, Mill Hill, Blackburn, Lancs.	B	L.A.	Baskets ..	7	—	7	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Brushes ..	17	—	17	1	—	1	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	18		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	8	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Sales Organisers	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Buttonhole Machining	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	1		
			Totals ..	26	8	34	1	—	1	35	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	36	13	49
(42) Blackpool and Fylde Society for the Blind, Castlegate, Lytham Road, South Shore, Blackpool.	C	Vol.	Bedding ..	7	3	10	1	—	1	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Brushes ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Chair-caning	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	5	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Shop Assistant ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	11	9	20	1	—	1	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	8	29
(43) Bolton Workshops for the Blind, Marsden Road, Bolton, Lancs.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	23	2	25	—	—	—	25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25		
			Brushes ..	21	—	21	3	—	3	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24		
			Chair-caning	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	3	3	—	2	2	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Mats ..	13	—	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Totals ..	57	8	65	3	2	5	70	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	70	14	84

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(44) Catholic Blind Institute, 59 Brunswick Road, Liverpool, 6.	O	Vol.	Baskets ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	6	6	—	2	2	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Mats ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Totals ..	8	6	14	—	2	2	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16	10	26
(45) Chester Blind Welfare Society, 67 Liverpool Road, Chester.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Brushes ..	7	—	7	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Chair-caning	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	5	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Totals ..	11	5	16	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16	5	21
(46) Henshaw's Institution for the Blind, Old Trafford, Manchester, 16.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	23	1	24	1	—	1	25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25		
			Bedding ..	9	2	11	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Boot & Shoe Repairs ..	13	—	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13		
			Brushes ..	33	3	36	—	—	—	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	36		
			Furniture ..	13	—	13	2	—	2	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	11	11	—	1	1	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Piano Tuning	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Canvassing ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Telephonists	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	98	17	115	3	1	4	119	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	119	27	146
(47) Liverpool Workshops and Birkenhead Society for the Blind (Incorporated), Cornwallis Street, Liverpool, 1.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	23	—	23	—	—	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23		
			Bedding & Upholstery	3	8	11	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Brushes ..	30	9	39	1	—	1	40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	40		
			Mats ..	35	—	35	—	—	—	35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	35		
			Stores ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Boilerman ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	93	17	110	1	—	1	111	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	111	28	139

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind							Severely Disabled Sighted							Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
				Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees	Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees			
				M	W	Total	M	W	Total		M	W	Total	M	W	Total				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(48) Macclesfield Society for the Blind 15 Queen Victoria Street, Macclesfield.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3	6
(49) St. Helens and District Society for the Welfare of the Blind, Boundary Road, St. Helens, Lancs.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Brushes ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Mats ..	3	—	3	1	—	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			General Foreman ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Sales Organiser	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Canteen ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	18	4	22	1	—	1	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23	7	30
(50) Warrington Workshops for Blind and Disabled Persons, Whitecross Homes, Wakefield Street, Warrington, Lancs.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	6	—	6	2	—	2	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Brushes ..	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Chair-caning	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	6	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Mats ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Paper Carrier Bags ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	3	8	—	—	—	8	8		
			Totals ..	15	7	22	2	—	2	24	5	3	8	—	—	—	8	32	9	41
(51) Wigan, Leigh and District Society for the Blind, 215–219 Darlington Street East, Wigan, Lancs.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	12	—	12	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Brushes ..	11	—	11	1	—	1	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Chair-caning	—	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	7	7	—	1	1	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Piano Tuning	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Labouring ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Sales Organiser	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Cleaning ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	26	10	36	1	1	2	38	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	38	13	51

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(52) Workshops for the Blind, Brunswick Street, Burnley, Lancs.	D	L.A.	Baskets ..	14	—	14	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Knitting ..	—	6	6	—	1	1	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Totals ..	14	6	20	—	1	1	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	11	32
(53) Workshops for the Blind, New Radcliffe Street, Oldham, Lancs.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	15	—	15	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15		
			Brushes ..	8	—	8	3	—	3	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	8	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Mats ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Totals ..	29	8	37	3	—	3	40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	40	14	54
(54) Workshops for the Blind, the Deaf and the Dumb, St. Petersgate, Stockport, Cheshire.	D	L.A.	Baskets ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Brushes ..	7	1	8	1	—	1	9	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	11		
			Chair-caning	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Firewood ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	7		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Piano Tuning	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			General ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Foreman Labouring ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	20	5	25	1	—	1	26	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	30	4	34
(55) Workshops of the Institute for Blind Welfare, Lytham Road, Fulwood, Preston, Lancs.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	13	1	14	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Boot & Shoe Repairs ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Brushes ..	12	1	13	2	—	2	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15		
			Chair-caning	—	1	1	—	1	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	10	10	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Canteen ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	28	14	42	2	1	3	45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	45	12	57

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
WALES																				
(56) Cardiff Institute for the Blind (Incorporated), 20 Newport Road, Cardiff.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	6	—	6	1	—	1	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Brushes ..	13	5	18	—	—	—	18	—	—	—	2	—	2	2	20		
			Chair-caning	—	8	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	9		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Mats ..	8	1	9	1	—	1	10	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	11		
			Ships' Fendoffs ..	9	—	9	1	—	1	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Weaving ..	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Outside Representatives ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Totals ..	41	21	62	3	—	3	65	—	—	—	3	1	4	4	69	37	106
(57) Carmarthenshire Blind Society, Llanelly Branch, 16 Vaughan Street, Llanelly.	D	Vol.	Baskets ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Brushes ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Chair-caning	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Mats ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	5	1	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	2	8
(58) Glamorgan County Council Workshops for the Blind, Factory G2, Treforest Trading Estate, Pontypridd.	D	L.A.	Baskets ..	7	—	7	2	—	2	9	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	10		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	6	6	—	1	1	7	—	5	5	—	—	—	5	12		
			Aids for Handicapped Persons	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	2		
			Totals ..	7	6	13	2	1	3	16	3	5	8	—	—	—	8	24	9	33
(59) Glamorgan County Council Workshops for the Blind, Pontrhondda Road, Llwynypia, Rhondda.	D	L.A.	Baskets ..	9	—	9	1	—	1	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Brushes ..	13	—	13	1	—	1	14	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	19		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	7	7	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7		
			Mats ..	17	—	17	—	—	—	17	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	18		
			Totals ..	39	7	46	2	—	2	48	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	54	11	65

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind							Severely Disabled Sighted							Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
				Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees	Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees			
				M	W	Total	M	W	Total		M	W	Total	M	W	Total				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(60) Merthyr Tydfil Institution for the Blind, 88 Pontmorlais, Merthyr Tydfil.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Brushes ..	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	3	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Mats ..	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Foreman ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	13	3	16	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16	6	22
(61) Newport and Monmouthshire Blind Workshops Committee, 199 Chepstow Road, Newport, Monmouthshire.	C	L.A.	Baskets ..	10	—	10	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Mats ..	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Wirework ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			General ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Foremen ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	28	4	32	—	—	—	32	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	32	6	38
(62) Swansea and South Wales Workshops for the Blind, Clase Road, Morriston, Swansea.	D	L.A.	Artificial Flowers ..	—	8	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	9		
			Baskets ..	13	—	13	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	14		
			Bedding ..	5	—	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Brushes ..	7	—	7	2	—	2	9	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	10		
			Chair-caning	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Mats ..	8	—	8	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8		
			Piano Tuning	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Totals ..	37	12	49	2	—	2	51	—	—	—	2	1	3	3	54	21	75
SCOTLAND																				
(63) Northern Counties Institute for the Blind, 38 Ardconnel Street, Inverness.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	9	—	9	1	—	1	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Bedding ..	11	—	11	1	—	1	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12		
			Totals ..	20	—	20	2	—	2	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	11	33

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind							Severely Disabled Sighted							Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
				Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees	Workers			Trainees			Total of Workers and Trainees			
				M	W	Total	M	W	Total		M	W	Total	M	W	Total				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(64) Royal Aberdeen Asylum for the Blind, 50 Huntly Street, Aberdeen.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	13	5	18	—	—	—	18	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	19		
			Bedding & Upholstery ..	29	11	40	3	—	3	43	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	43		
			Brushes ..	10	2	12	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	3	—	3	3	15		
			Chair-caning	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Mats ..	4	—	4	2	—	2	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Wirework ..	8	—	8	1	—	1	9	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	10		
			Warehouse ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Labouring ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Collecting ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Packing & Stores ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Typing ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	70	19	89	6	—	6	95	—	—	—	5	—	5	5	100	50	150
(65) Royal Blind Asylum and School, Gillespie Crescent, Edinburgh, 10.	C	Vol.	Baskets ..	22	—	22	7	—	7	29	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	29		
			Bedding & Upholstery	31	13	44	2	2	4	48	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	48		
			Brushes ..	11	3	14	4	—	4	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	18		
			Chair-caning	15	5	20	1	—	1	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	4	4	—	1	1	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Mats ..	8	—	8	2	—	2	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Wirework ..	21	1	22	5	—	5	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	27		
			General ..	6	—	6	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6		
			Piano Tuning	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Labouring ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Braille Printing ..	10	9	19	—	—	—	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19		
			Book Binding ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Travelling ..	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3		
			Shorthand Typist ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Telephonists	1	1	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Despatch ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Collecting ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Cleaning ..	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	134	39	173	21	3	24	197	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	197	31	228

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaoers, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPROVED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Name and Address of Workshops	Cost Symbol	Type of Management	Trades	Blind: Workers M	Blind: Workers W	Blind: Workers Total	Blind: Trainees M	Blind: Trainees W	Blind: Trainees Total	Blind: Total of Workers and Trainees	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Workers Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees M	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees W	Severely Disabled Sighted: Trainees Total	Severely Disabled Sighted: Total of Workers and Trainees	Total of Blind and Severely Disabled Sighted	*Approximate no. of Sighted fit Employees at last Inspection	Grand Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
(66) Royal Dundee Institution for the Blind, Magdalen Green, Dundee.	B	Vol.	Baskets ..	17	—	17	4	—	4	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21		
			Bedding & Upholstery	36	2	38	9	2	11	49	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	49		
			Brushes ..	9	—	9	—	—	—	9	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	10		
			Chair-caning	8	1	9	—	—	—	9	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	10		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	8	8	—	1	1	9	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	10		
			Mats ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Wirework ..	2	—	2	1	—	1	3	3	—	3	—	—	—	3	6		
			Labouring ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2		
			Despatch ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Shorthand Typist	—	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1		
			Totals ..	76	12	88	14	3	17	105	5	1	6	—	—	—	6	111	30	141
(67) Royal Glasgow Asylum for the Blind, 111 Saracen Street, Glasgow, N.2.	D	L.A.	Baskets ..	51	1	52	6	—	6	58	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	58		
			Bedding & Upholstery	43	19	62	14	3	17	79	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	79		
			Boot & Shoe Repairs ..	8	—	8	1	—	1	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9		
			Brushes ..	63	5	68	8	—	8	76	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	76		
			Chair-caning	7	7	14	2	—	2	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16		
			Carpentry ..	35	5	40	13	—	13	53	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	53		
			Machine Knitting ..	—	7	7	—	3	3	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10		
			Mats ..	13	—	13	1	—	1	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14		
			Wirework ..	18	—	18	6	—	6	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24		
			General ..	4	1	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5		
			Sales Organiser	4	—	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4		
			Clerk ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	1		
			Gateman ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	1		
			Totals ..	246	45	291	51	6	57	348	1	—	1	1	—	1	2	350	91	441

* Including Managerial, Supervisory, Clerical, Shop floor, Sales staff, Cleaners, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 4

BLIND PERSONS IN OPEN EMPLOYMENT* AND IN WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND (EXCLUDING TRAINEES)

AGE—ANALYSIS

(a) England and Wales

Year ended		16–20		21–39		40–49		50–59		60–64		65+		Total	
		Opeo	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Opeo	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind
31st December, 1959 ..	M	86	7	1,380	641	1,258	678	1,202	747	539	205	446	62	4,911	2,340
	F	56	7	492	198	247	208	244	172	69	35	56	9	1,164	629
	Total	142	14	1,872	839	1,505	886	1,446	919	608	240	502	71	6,075	2,969
Percentage of Blind Population in Age Group				31·4%	14·6%	23·6%	13·9%	14·2%	9·1%	8·1%	3·2%				

(b) Scotland

Year ended		16–20		21–39		40–49		50–59		60–64		65+		Total	
		Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind	Open	Work-shops for the Blind
31st March, 1960	M	1	2	60	155	58	194	79	178	37	60	33	13	268	602
	F	3	2	41	43	21	31	10	39	3	3	1	1	79	119
	Total	4	4	101	198	79	225	89	217	40	63	34	14	347	721
Percentage of Blind Population in Age Group				15·2%	29·9%	10·3%	29·3%	6·7%	16·3%	4·4%	7%				

* These figures do not include blind persons who are employed in business on their own account under the approved "Homeworkers Schemes" run by local authorities or voluntary bodies on their behalf, which cover about 1,100 blind men and women.

Appendix 5

ANALYSIS OF TRADES FOLLOWED BY BLIND PERSONS IN EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING IN WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND AT 31st MAY, 1960

Trade	Employed			In Training			Grand Total
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	
Artificial flowers ..	—	8	8	—	—	—	8
Basket making ..	902	24	926	68	—	68	994
Bedding & upholstery	307	83	390	39	8	47	437
Boot & shoe repairing	74	—	74	1	—	1	75
Braille printing and book binding ..	11	9	20	—	—	—	20
Brush making ..	709	51	760	60	1	61	821
Cardboard box making	14	6	20	1	1	2	22
Carpentry and woodwork .. (including furniture making)	59	5	64	16	—	16	80
Chair caning and fibre furniture making	76	81	157	4	2	6	163
Light engineering and assembly	47	13	60	—	—	—	60
Firewood chopping and bundling ..	40	—	40	—	—	—	40
Machine knitting ..	4	407	411	—	26	26	437
Labouring	20	—	20	—	—	—	20
Mat making ..	377	1	378	26	—	26	404
Piano tuning and repairing	32	—	32	1	—	1	33
Plastics	19	1	20	2	—	2	22
Pottery	—	6	6	—	—	—	6
Ships' fendoffs ..	19	—	19	1	—	1	20
Soap making ..	13	11	24	—	—	—	24
Weaving	—	9	9	—	—	—	9
Wirework	82	3	85	16	—	16	101
Foremen	6	—	6	—	—	—	6
Sales representatives and shop assistants	24	2	26	—	—	—	26
Miscellaneous .. (including coal bag, coat hanger, soft toy and mop making; general hands, porters, handymen, caretakers and warehouse workers; maintenance joiners; canteen workers and cleaners; collecting, dispatching, packing and store keeping; typists and telephonists)	58	17	75	—	—	—	75
Totals	2,893	737	3,630	235	38	273	3,903

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 6

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF TRAINEES IN WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND AT 30th JUNE, 1960

Age groups	England and Wales (a)		Scotland (b)		Totals of Columns (a) and (b)		
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Total
16–20	17	4	21	5	38	9	47
21–39	61	15	34	4	95	19	114
40–49	43	6	18	2	61	8	69
50–59	29	2	21	1	50	3	53
60–64	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Totals	151	27	94	12	245	39	284

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 7

SEVERELY DISABLED SIGHTED PERSONS IN WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND AT 31st MARCH, 1962

Workshop	Number of Approved Places	Number of Trainees	Number of Employees	Trades
Aberdeen—Royal Asylum for the Blind	24	8	8	Brush making, basket making, furniture making, wire spring working, warehouse work
Barnsley. County Borough of Barnsley Blind Welfare Workshop	1 (*ad hoc* arrangement)	—	1	Radio and television repairs
Birmingham. City of Birmingham Workshops for the Blind	10	—	2	Packing and finishing
Blackburn. County Borough of Blackburn Workshops for the Blind	6	1	1	Buttonhole machining, basket finishing, chair caning and rush seating
Blackpool and Fylde Society for the Blind	7	—	2	Knitting and bedding (mattress stitching)
Bolton. County Borough of Bolton Workshops for the Blind	1	—	—	Brush boring
Bradford. City of Bradford Royal Institution for the Blind	10	—	1	Mattress making
Brighton—Barclay Workshops for Blind Women and other Disabled Persons	11	—	3	Machine knitting
Bristol Royal Workshops for the Blind	Not specified	—	4	Light engineering
Cardiff Institute for the Blind	10	3	7	Basket making, brush making, mat making
Carlisle—Cumberland and Westmorland Home and Workshops for the Blind	6	—	3	Basket making, typing, watch and clock repairing
Dundee—Royal Institution for the Blind	17	2	5	Woodwork assembly, upholstery, brush making, basket making
Edinburgh—Royal Blind Asylum and School	7	3	4	Reader, stock keeping, brush boring, welding
Exeter. City of Exeter Workshops for the Blind	20	—	13	Manufacture of wire coat hangers, mat making, upholstering, crate repairing

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Workshop	Number of Approved Places	Number of Trainees	Number of Employees	Trades
Glamorgan County Council Workshops for the Blind:				
(1) Rhondda	6	—	6	Brush making, mat making
(2) Treforest Trading Estate	11	1	10	Knitting, basket making, appliance making
Glasgow Royal Asylum for the Blind	50	9	7	Bedding and upholstery; boot and shoe repairing; brush making; carpentry; cane furniture making; wirework
Huddersfield. County Borough of Huddersfield Workshop for the Blind	1 (*ad hoc* arrangement)	—	1	Gardening
Hull and East Riding Institute for the Blind	26	—	11	Basket making, brush making, inspection work
Ipswich. County Borough of Ipswich Workshops for the Blind	1	1	—	Chair caning and reversible mat making
Leatherhead—Royal School for the Blind	5 (approved in principle)	—	—	
Leeds. City of Leeds Blind Welfare Department	10	3	3	Chair caning, wirework
Nottingham—Royal Midland Institution for the Blind	11	—	3	Brush filling, wire brush making
Oxford. City of Oxford Sheltered Workshop	25	2	10	Woodturning, chair caning, clerical, watch and clock repairing, printing
Scunthorpe—Lindsey Blind Society	6	—	1	Brush making, basket making
Sunderland and Durham County Incorporated Royal Institution for the Blind	6	—	2	Brush boring, mat making
Swansea. County Borough of Swansea. Swansea and South Wales Workshops for the Blind	30	1	5	Brush making, basket making, knitting, artificial flower making, light assembly work
Warrington. County Borough of Warrington Workshops for Blind and Disabled Persons	24	—	8	Paper bag manufacture
West Ham. County Borough of West Ham Municipal Workshops for the Blind	6	—	3	Brush making
Wigan, Leigh and District Society for the Blind	1	—	—	Knitting
Yorkshire School for the Blind	6	—	—	Brush making
		34	124	

The above table does not include the City of Portsmouth Workshop for the Blind, which has a special arrangement with Remploy Ltd.; on 31st March, 1962, 39 sighted disabled workers were employed in the following trades: basket making; brush making; chair caning; boot repairing; machine knitting; radio repairing.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 8

(a) "*Qualifying Standards*" *of Piece-Work Earnings, January*, 1962

Trade	*England and Wales*	*Scotland*
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Basket making	2 15 11	3 0 4
Brush making Pitch-set	2 13 4	2 13 2
Wire-drawn	No standard fixed	1 17 2
Mat making	2 17 4	2 18 0
Flat Machine Knitting	3 3 0	2 14 10
Round Machine Knitting	No standard fixed	1 8 9
Bedding	Under review	5 2 4

(b) "*Minimum Wage*" *January*, 1962

	Men	*Women*
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
*England and Wales**		
London	10 0 0	7 10 0
Zone A (larger towns)	9 9 0	7 1 9
Zone B (smaller towns and rural areas)	9 6 0	6 19 6
Scotland	9 19 6	7 9 8

* These rates were increased by 7s. a week for men and 5s. 3d. for women with effect from 2nd April, 1962, following an agreement of the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Services (Manual Workers).

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 9

SURVEY OF PERSONS NEWLY REGISTERED AS BLIND IN 1960

1. In order to ascertain the number of newly blind persons entering the employment field each year, all local authorities were asked to render a return in respect of all persons, between the ages of sixteen and sixty-four inclusive, who were newly registered as blind during the year ended 31st December, 1960 in England and Wales, and 31st March, 1961 in Scotland.

2. Returns were received in respect of 2,060 persons, of whom 428 were recorded as being in the employment field six months after the end of the year under review. (This date was taken as the operative date for the purpose of the enquiry, in order to make it possible for an assessment to be made of the employment position of those persons who were registered towards the end of the year.) The great majority of the others were considered to be not available for, or not capable of, work. Local authority officers were asked whether any of those blind persons classified as available for work but incapable of it would be capable of undertaking unskilled work if it were available in workshops. Only nine persons were put in this category.

3. Of the 428 in the employment field, 237 (213 in England and Wales and 24 in Scotland) were by 30th June, 1961 in open employment or training for it; 44 were in employment or training in workshops for the blind; and six were in homeworkers' schemes. The unemployed totalled 141; of these, 116 were considered to be capable of and available for ordinary employment and the remaining 25 suitable for sheltered employment. A full analysis, by age-groups, is given in Table 1 (England and Wales) and Table 2 (Scotland). It will be seen that the majority of the newly registered blind considered to be in the employment field (277 out of 428) were over forty years of age and many were over fifty.

4. Three hundred and seventeen blind persons in England and Wales were either in open employment or considered suitable for it, representing 85 per cent. of the total number in the employment field. One hundred and thirty nine of them (44 per cent.) were over fifty years of age. The corresponding figures for Scotland were 36, 64 per cent. of the total, of whom 24 (67 per cent.) were over fifty. The difference in the percentage assessed as suitable for ordinary employment in Scotland, as compared with England and Wales, is no doubt accounted for by the nature of industry in Scotland, by the fact that during the year under review only one specialist placing officer for the blind was in post in Scotland, and by the traditional Scottish belief in sheltered employment.

5. Tables 3 and 4 show the occupations of the 237 who had entered open employment or were training for it by 30th June, 1961. Thirty-one per cent. in England and Wales, and 54 per cent. in Scotland, were engaged in professional, executive, clerical or sales work. The remainder were employed in industry or services. It is of interest to note that only one person was employed on machine operating in Scotland compared with 33 in England and Wales.

6. Of the 116 blind persons (104 in England and Wales and 12 in Scotland) who were unemployed though considered suitable for ordinary employment, 75 (67 in England and Wales and eight in Scotland) were said to have poor prospects of obtaining it. An age distribution of these persons is shown in Table 5. Some of these might eventually seek sheltered employment if it were within easy reach. Forty-seven of them were over fifty years of age and might not be suitable for training in the present trades. They were fairly evenly distributed over the country and their poor prospects of employment did not appear to have any relation to variations in the employment situation in different parts of the country. (See Table 6.)

7. Of the 25 unemployed persons considered suitable for sheltered employment, only four were considered to have poor prospects of obtaining it (two were in Scotland and two in

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Yorkshire). The 44 blind persons who had already, by June, 1961, entered sheltered workshops were said by the local authorities to have done so for the following reasoos:

	England and Wales	*Scotland*	*Total*
Number of blind persons who preferred workshop to ordioary employment	15	4	19
Number recommended for sheltered employment because they were considered unsuitable for ordinary employment	14	4	18
Number recommended for sheltered employment because ordinary employment, though it was suitable and would have been preferred, was not available	6	1	7
	35	9	44

8. One hundred and fifty of the employable blind in England and Wales had attended courses of residential industrial rehabilitotion and 128 (86 per cent.) had been recommended for open employment. Comparobie figures for Scotland were 17 of whom six (35 per cent.) had been recommended for open employment. In view of the close correlation between the 86 per cent. recommended for open employment by the Torquay Centre and the overall assessment of 85 per cent. by local authorities in England and Wales, it is reasonable to assume that this is a very reliable figure.

9. The fact that only 167 blind people (out of 428) attended courses of industrial rehabilitation might seem to indicate that too few new registrants avail themselves of the facilities. This is not necessorily so, since it is known that in the twelve months under review, 329 persons were admitted to the residential courses of industrial rehabilitation centres at Torquay and Ceres and on unknown number took advontage of the non-residential facilities provided by the London County Council. It is more likely that the figures show that there is an unduly long gop between registration and odmission to rehabilitation centres. On the other hand, the survey showed that less than half of those already in sheltered workshops (only 15 out of 35 in England and Wales and four out of nine in Scotlond) had had the benefit of residential rehabilitation.

See tables on pages 87–92

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

England and Wales

PERSONS REGISTERED AS BLIND DURING 1960

TABLE 1

Employment position at 30th June, 1961

Age Groups		Number in open employment or training for open employment	Number in employment or training for employment in Workshops for the Blind	Number in homeworking schemes for the blind or training for such work	Number unemployed but capable of and available for work in			Total number of employable Blind Persons	Proportion of Blind Persons in or available for		
					Open industry	Workshops for the blind	Homeworkers schemes		Open Employment (Cols. 2 and 5 as percentage of column 8)	Workshop Employment (Cols. 3 and 6 as percentage of column 8)	Employment as Homeworkers (Cols. 4 and 7 as percentage of column 8)
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
16–20	Men	8	2	—	4	—	—	14	85·7	14·3	—
	Women	2	1	—	2	—	—	5	80·0	20·0	—
	Total	10	3	—	6	—	—	19	84·2	15·8	—
21–39	Men	49	11	1	18	4	2	85	78·8	17·7	3·5
	Women	22	1	1	5	—	—	29	93·2	3·4	3·4
	Total	71	12	2	23	4	2	114	82·5	14·0	3·5
40–49	Men	39	14	2	23	3	1	82	75·6	20·7	3·7
	Women	5	2	—	1	—	—	8	75·0	25·0	—
	Total	44	16	2	24	3	1	90	75·6	21·1	3·3
50–59	Men	54	4	1	41	4	1	105	90·5	7·6	1·9
	Women	14	—	—	4	—	—	18	100·0	—	—
	Total	68	4	1	45	4	1	123	91·9	6·5	1·6
60–64	Men	15	—	—	6	—	—	21	100·0	—	—
	Women	4	—	—	—	—	—	4	100·0	—	—
	Total	19	—	—	6	—	—	25	100·0	—	—
65 and over	Men	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	100·0	—	—
	Women	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Total	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	100·0	—	—
Totals	Men	166	31	4	92	11	4	308	83·8	13·6	2·6
	Women	47	4	1	12	—	—	64	92·2	6·2	1·6
	Total	213	35	5	104	11	4	372	85·2	12·4	2·4

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Scotland

PERSONS REGISTERED AS BLIND DURING YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1961

TABLE 2

Employment position at 30th September, 1961

Age Groups		Number in open employment or training for open employment	Number in employment or training for employment in Workshops for the Blind	Number in homeworking schemes for the blind or training for such work	Number unemployed but capable of and available for work in			Total number of employable Blind Persons	Proportion of Blind Persons in or available for		
					Open industry	Workshops for the blind	Homeworkers schemes		Open Employment (Cols. 2 and 5 as percentage of column 8)	Workshop Employment (Cols. 3 and 6 as percentage of column 8)	Employment as Homeworkers (Cols. 4 and 7 as percentage of column 8)
1		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
16–20	Men	—	2	—	1	2	—	5	20·0	80·0	—
	Women	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Total	—	2	—	1	2	—	5	20·0	80·0	—
21–39	Men	2	2	—	1	3	—	8	37·5	62·5	—
	Women	2	—	1	—	1	1	5	40·0	20·0	40·0
	Total	4	2	1	1	4	1	13	38·4	46·2	15·4
40–49	Men	3	2	—	2	2	—	9	55·5	44·5	—
	Women	—	1	—	1	—	—	2	50·0	50·0	—
	Total	3	3	—	3	2	—	11	54·6	45·4	—
50–59	Men	8	2	—	3	1	—	14	78·6	21·4	—
	Women	2	—	—	3	—	—	5	100·0	—	—
	Total	10	2	—	6	1	—	19	84·2	15·8	—
60–64	Men	6	—	—	1	—	—	7	100·0	—	—
	Women	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	100·0	—	—
	Total	7	—	—	1	—	—	8	100·0	—	—
65 and over	Men	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Women	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Total	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	Men	19	8	—	8	8	—	43	62·8	37·2	—
	Women	5	1	1	4	1	1	13	69·2	15·4	15·4
	Total	24	9	1	12	9	1	56	64·3	32·1	3·6

TABLE 3

England and Wales

PERSONS REGISTERED AS BLIND DURING 1960

Occupations of persons in ordinary employment or training for it at 30th June, 1961

Occupational Classification (Note: n.e.c.=not elsewhere classified) 1	Open Employment 2
Professional, Technical, Administrative and Executive Workers, Managerial Workers	
Classn. No.	
1 Masseurs and Physiotherapists	3
2 Lecturers, Teachers, Instructors (inc. Craft Instructors)	7
3 Clergy and members of Religious Orders	3
4 Barristers, Solicitors and related workers	2
5 Musicians (inc. Music Teachers)	—
6 Social, Welfare and related workers (inc. Placement Officers)	—
7 Proprietors, Managers and Executive Workers in Industry and Commerce	5
8 Other Workers in Group 1 (n.e.c.)	4
Clerical and Related Workers	
9 Typists, Shorthand Typists, Secretaries	7
10 Braille Copyists and Proof Readers	—
11 Clerical Workers	5
12 Telephone Operators	11
Sales Workers	
13 Working Proprietors, Shop Managers	13
14 Shop Assistants, Salesmen	3
15 Street Vendors, Newsvendors, Hawkers	1
16 Sales Representatives, Agents, Collectors, Commercial Travellers	2
Agricultural and Horticultural Workers	
17 Farmers, Farm Managers, Market Gardeners, Farm Workers	8
18 Gardeners, Groundsmen	4
19 Animal Husbandry (inc. Poultry Keeping)	2
Craftsmen, Production Process Workers, Labourers	
20 Machine Tool Operators	17
21 Fitters and Assemblers	16
22 Viewers, Inspectors, Testers	4
23 Boxers, Fillers, Packers	14
24 Warehousemen, Storekeepers, and Assistants	2
25 Carpenters and Joiners	1
26 Knitters (Hand and Machine), Weavers, Netting Makers	—
27 Upholsterers, Machinists (Bedding, etc.) Mattress Makers	1
28 Basket Makers	—
29 Mat Makers	—
30 Chair Seaters	—
31 Brush Makers	1
32 Wireworkers	—
33 Boot and Shoe Repairers	1
34 Piano Tuners	1
35 Firewood Workers	—
36 Craftsmen and Production Process Workers (n.e.c.)	8
37 Labourers (n.e.c.)	23
Service and Miscellaneous Workers	
38 Domestic/Canteen Workers, Cleaners, Caretakers, Porters	21
39 Launderers, Dry Cleaners	—
40 Miscellaneous Workers (n.e.c.)	23

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

TABLE 4

Scotland

PERSONS REGISTERED AS BLIND DURING YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1961

Occupations of persons in ordinary employment or training for it at 30th September, 1961

Occupational Classification (Note: n.e.c. = not elsewhere classified) 1	Open Employment 2
Professional, Technical, Administrative and Executive Workers, Managerial Workers	
Classn. No.	
1 Masseurs and Physiotherapists	1
2 Lecturers, Teachers, Instructors (inc. Craft Instructors)	1
3 Clergy and members of Religious Orders	—
4 Barristers, Solicitors and related workers	—
5 Musicians (inc. Music Teachers)	—
6 Social, Welfare and related workers (inc. Placement Officers)	—
7 Proprietors, Managers and Executive Workers in Industry and Commerce	1
8 Other Workers in Group 1 (n.e.c.)	—
Clerical and Related Workers	
9 Typists, Shorthand Typists, Secretaries	—
10 Braille Copyists and Proof Readers	—
11 Clerical Workers	1
12 Telephone Operators	3
Sales Workers	
13 Working Proprietors, Shop Managers	3
14 Shop Assistants, Salesmen	1
15 Street Vendors, Newsvendors, Hawkers	1
16 Sales Representatives, Agents, Collectors, Commercial Travellers	1
Agricultural and Horticultural Workers	
17 Farmers, Farm Managers, Market Gardeners, Farm Workers	—
18 Gardeners, Groundsmen	—
19 Animal Husbandry (inc. Poultry Keeping)	—
Craftsmen, Production Process Workers, Labourers	
20 Machine Tool Operators	—
21 Fitters and Assemblers	1
22 Viewers, Inspectors, Testers	—
23 Boxers, Fillers, Packers	—
24 Warehousemen, Storekeepers and Assistants	3
25 Carpenters and Joiners	—
26 Knitters (Hand and Machine), Weavers, Netting Makers	—
27 Upholsterers, Machinists (Bedding, etc.), Mattress Makers	—
28 Basket Makers	—
29 Mat Makers	—
30 Chair Seaters	—
31 Brush Makers	—
32 Wireworkers	—
33 Boot and Shoe Repairers	—
34 Piano Tuners	—
35 Firewood Workers	—
36 Craftsmen and Production Process Workers (n.e.c.)	—
37 Labourers (n.e.c.)	2
Service and Miscellaneous Workers	
38 Domestic/Canteen Workers, Cleaners, Caretakers, Porters	3
39 Launderers, Dry Cleaners	—
40 Miscellaneous Workers (n.e.c.)	2

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

TABLE 5

PERSONS REGISTERED AS BLIND

Age distribution of persons who, at 30th June, 1961 (30th September, 1961 in Scotland) were unemployed and were considered suitable for employment but for whom employment prospects were poor

Age Group		England and Wales			Scotland		
		Open Industry	Workshop Employment	Home-work	Open Industry	Workshop Employment	Home-work
1		2	3	4	2	3	4
16–20	Men	1	—	—	1	—	—
	Women	1	—	—	—	—	—
	Total	2	—	—	1	—	—
21–39	Men	8	—	—	—	1	—
	Women	1	—	—	—	—	—
	Total	9	—	—	—	1	—
40–49	Men	14	1	—	1	—	—
	Women	—	—	—	1	—	—
	Total	14	1	—	2	—	—
50–59	Men	34	1	—	1	1	—
	Women	4	—	—	3	—	—
	Total	38	1	—	4	1	—
60–64	Men	4	—	—	1	—	—
	Women	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Total	4	—	—	1	—	—
65 and over	Men	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Women	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Total	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	Men	61	2	—	4	2	—
	Women	6	—	—	4	—	—
	Total	67	2	—	8	2	—

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

TABLE 6

PERSONS REGISTERED AS BLIND DURING 1960

Geographical distribution of persons who, at 30th June, 1961 were unemployed and were considered suitable for employment but for whom employment prospects were poor

Ministry of Labour Region	Considered suitable for but with poor prospects of		
	Item 13(1) Employment in Open Industry	Item 14(1) Workshop employment	Item 15(1) Home-work
1	2	3	4
Northern	5	—	—
East and West Ridings	5	2	—
North Midlands	7	—	—
Eastern and Southern	7	—	—
London and South Eastern	13	—	—
South Western	3	—	—
Wales Office	6	—	—
Midland	7	—	—
North Western	14	—	—
Scotland	8	2	—
Total	75	4	—

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 10

ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE CONCERNING WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND IN GREAT BRITAIN

Introductory Note

1. The Working Party gave public notice inviting written evidence. Letters inviting evidence were also sent to all organisations known to have an interest in the subject and to the managers of all workshops for the blind. A list of all bodies and persons who submitted evidence is given in Appendix 1, which also shows those who were invited to give oral evidence.

2. The following analysis does not purport to give a complete summary of all the extensive written and oral evidence, but rather to bring out the main points of agreement and disagreement among witnesses and to record information (e.g. on new types of work which have been introduced into some workshops) which the Working Party found to be of particular interest.

3. Information supplied on behalf of individual workshops has been attributed in each case to "the . . . workshop" or "the workshop at . . ." instead of quoting the full title of the voluntary organisation or local authority department responsible for it. The full title and address of each workshop will be found in Appendix 3.

4. Throughout the analysis, the following abbreviations are used:

Abbreviation	*Full title, and explanatory comments*
N.A.W.B.	National Association of Workshops for the Blind, Incorporated.
National League	National League of the Blind of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
C.C.A.	County Councils Association.
A.M.C.	Association of Municipal Corporations.
R.N.I.B.	Royal National Institute for the Blind.
National Federation	National Federation of the Blind of the United Kingdom. (An organisation of blind persons.)
North Regional Association	North Regional Association for the Blind. (An association of local authorities and welfare societies in the North of England.)
College of Teachers	Craft Instructors' Examining Board of the College of Teachers of the Blind.
Scottish Federation	Scottish National Federation for the Welfare of the Blind. (A federation of local authorities and welfare organisations for the blind in Scotland.)
Scottish J.I.C.	Joint Industrial Council for Scottish Workshops for the Blind.
London Joint Committee	Joint Committee of the London Workshops for the Blind.
Directors of Welfare Services	Association of Directors of Welfare Services (of local authorities).

A. THE NEED FOR THE WORKSHOPS AND THE CLASSES OF BLIND PERSONS FOR WHOM THEY SHOULD CATER

5. All the organisations and workshops which presented evidence agreed that workshops for the blind were still needed, but there were differences of view about their future role.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

6. *The Directors of Welfare Services* pointed out that many of the present workers would reach retirement age within the next ten years, and that there were fewer entrants from the blind schools than in the past; they considered that some workshops would have to be closed unless opened to other classes of the disabled—a solution which they recommended. They thought that the workshops had great psychological value for people who might otherwise consider themselves a burden on society. They noted also that some blind people preferred sheltered employment and might be better off financially there than in open employment. Nevertheless, they suggested that it was a "disservice" to the blind to make sheltered conditions available to all "irrespective of potential"; and thought the aim—seldom realised at present—should be to use the sheltered workshop for the blind as a stepping stone to independence. *The C.C.A.* considered that workshops would be needed for as long as could be foreseen, as there would always be some blind persons who lacked the temperament or ability to compete in the open market even in periods of full employment, and placing in such employment would be more difficult in times of recession. The tendency of the more able blind people to seek open employment had led to the acceptance by the workshops of blind persons of a lower standard than previously, including some of "borderline potential". Even so, the numbers seeking sheltered employment were decreasing; and they agreed that some workshops might have to close, unless opened to the sighted disabled. *The A.M.C.* also noted the lower calibre of present-day entrants to the workshops, but remarked that this trend was not so marked in areas where there was little opportunity for placing in open industry. They thought that the need for sheltered employment was likely to continue at the present level, except perhaps for the removal from the workshops of people unable to make an economic contribution. *The National League* also took the view that "sheltered employment has still a place in the field of blind welfare and will continue to meet the needs of those who for various reasons find working in open industry either unattractive or unsuitable". Blind people working under sheltered conditions found life less of a strain and valued the freedom of movement which they enjoyed at their work. *The N.A.W.B.* said that experience had shown that some blind people needed sheltered employment, and, indeed, that many of those originally "drafted into open industry" later wished to enter the workshops. They considered that there was insufficient liaison between the workshops and the residential rehabilitation centres for the blind, and that there was a tendency for the latter to recommend open employment too readily.

7. It was clear that some Associations giving evidence took a very different view from others about the advisability of placing blind persons in open employment. *The College of Teachers* thought a number of capable blind school leavers at present going into open industry would be happier in sheltered employment where they would have "freedom of movement" and "full opportunity to develop their personality"; they considered that there was a tendency to place young people in open industry whether or not they were "mentally and physically suited to the monotony of small repetitive processes". They thought it a pity that young people were being discouraged from entering workshops because of the description "sheltered".

8. *The R.N.I.B.*, on the other hand, thought sheltered employment should only be considered after the possibilities of employment in open industry had been thoroughly investigated (which would mean the provision of a highly specialised placement service in all areas) and such work had been found to be unsuitable, unacceptable, or unavailable. Even then sheltered work should not be regarded as an end in itself; employees should be encouraged to move on to open industry after they had gained confidence. They visualised the worksbops catering mainly for people who were physically, mentally or temperamentally unsuited to competitive employment or of low ability—except in a minority of areas where jobs in open industry might not be readily available. They had found most newly blinded people wanted open rather than sheltered employment, but the latter possibility was not ignored by the rehabilitation centres, who recommended it in about 10 per cent. of cases.

9. Many witnesses pointed out that opportunities for blind people in open industry depended not only on the aptitude or potential skill of the Individual, but also on whether he was free to leave his home district and, if not, the kind of industries available there. It was often stated, however, that opportunities might be improved by the further development of specialised placing services.

10. All organisations covering Scotland, as well as individual Scottish workshops, emphasised that the employment of the blind in open industry had not developed there to the same extent as in many parts of England and Wales, and all were convinced of the continuing need for all the existing Scottish Workshops. Indeed, the *Scottish Federation*

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

considered that workshop provision should be expanded. Several Scottish witnesses stressed the importance of achieving and maintaining high standards of industrial efficiency in the workshops, which they felt would be threatened by any widespread move into open employment.

11. The evidence of English organisations confirmed that it was difficult to maintain proper industrial standards in the workshops in districts where the better blind workers mostly entered open industry. *The A.M.C.* expressed the view that many of the present blind workshop employees were not strictly within the field of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts, since they were not capable of producing work of substantial economic value—though some might be able to do better if simpler work were introduced. A good deal of concern was expressed by various witnesses about blind people who failed to reach the nationally agreed qualifying standards for new entrants to the traditional trades. *The N.A.W.B.*, in their written evidence, suggested that such people might be retained in the workshops but paid lower wages than other workers. In oral evidence, however, their representatives agreed it would be preferable, if it were practicable, to solve the problem by introducing simpler unskilled work, possibly in new workshop trades, on which many of these people would probably do better, and to provide separate centres for those really capable only of diversionary work. Such arrangements were favoured by other witnesses. *The Scottish J.I.C.* suggested that sections of existing workshops might be set aside as diversionary centres.

B. THE WORK DONE IN WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND AND THE QUESTION OF INTRODUCING NEW TRADES

12. Most associations and workshops presenting evidence were concerned about the declining markets for the traditional blind products, and were anxious to see new trades introduced, provided this did not lead to redundancy. There was also general agreement that the number of trades practised in each workshop should be decreased. The views of *the C.C.A.* may be quoted as typical:

> "The trades were originally well chosen in that they satisfied *inter alia* the following requirements, i.e. they made goods (i) which were in wide demand; and (ii) in which craftwork was an essential feature of the production process—so that the products were not subject to competition from mass production. In recent years these traditional trades have been increasingly exposed to competition both from mass production of the product and by the importation of goods manufactured in under-developed countries where wages are low. In efficient workshops, however, these difficulties have to some extent been offset by concentration on "quality production" or by seeking a specialised corner of the market which would not normally interest large-scale producers, e.g. gymnasium mats, pigeon baskets, special size mats, and quality knitwear. The position has been aggravated by the movement of blind persons with higher potential skill to open industry, but this development may serve as a pointer to the possibilities of an extension of the type of work available since blind persons in open industry have demonstrated that they are capable of work different from that of the traditional trades. One field of development which could well be explored is the possibility of leavening the existing craftwork by the introduction to the workshops of suitable outwork undertaken on behalf of commercial firms. This may not be readily acceptable to all workers in that the work may not bring the same satisfaction as true craftwork and repetitive processes may be disliked. It would, however, be most advantageous because long training is not usually involved and economic earnings will generally be higher than for craftwork".

They suggested that Remploy might provide outwork. *The A.M.C.* also favoured the introduction of new trades, though they thought production in traditional trades could be improved by introducing new processes and more attention to industrial design.

13. *The National League*, while considering that "there are many who find working at a skilled craft more interesting and congenial than doing a repetitive job", favoured the introduction of some new industries involving mechanisation and systems of division of labour, since they would be more economic. *The N.A.W.B.* pointed out that it was generally the poorer type of newly blinded person who entered the workshops today, yet the traditional trades were more difficult to learn than the mechanical repetitive work now available to the blind in open industry. They considered that "the introduction of more easily assimilated trades is a necessity". They added, however, that "it is reasonable to suppose that some of the traditional trades will continue to provide employment for those following them,

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

especially as such trades are now of little or no interest to the ordinary sighted able-bodied person". *The R.N.I.B.* expressed the view that most people, including the blind, were not suitable for skilled crafts and were happy on unskilled or semi-skilled production work, and suggested that workshops should break down production methods on the lines of ordinary industry; they also made the point that the introduction of new trades and machinery into the workshops might enable some blind workers to progress from the workshops to ordinary employment. Their experience in placing over 5,000 blind people in ordinary jobs had been that machine operating, assembly and inspection work offered suitable industrial openings for the blind. *The Scottish Federation* expressed the view that the traditional trades were "suited to the blind" and (in oral evidence) that they were aesthetically satisfying though not money earners, but they thought there was room for some mechanisation and the introduction of some new types of work, perhaps complementary to the trades already practised. Quality and design were, they thought, of paramount importance.

14. Only the *College of Teachers* did not suggest the introduction of any new processes; on the contrary, they expressed doubts about the "tying of the blind to a machine" in ordinary industry and thought many blind persons employed there would be happier engaged on craft work in the workshops. They favoured, however, some subdivision of work in the traditional crafts so that the most skilled and capable workers could specialise on the more difficult operations, leaving the less competent workers to do the rest.

15. A different attitude to craft work was expressed by the only individual blind worker who submitted evidence to the Working Party, saying he had been working in a traditional trade in a workshop for the blind for 18 years. He wrote critically of the "dampness of basket-making, the dust and smells of mat-making, the dust, dirt and hot pitch fumes of brush-making" and urged the introduction of "cleaner work", saying the workshops needed "a strong wind of change".

16. The practical obstacles to the introduction of non-traditional work were stressed by the *Directors of Welfare Services*, who commented on the capital costs involved and thought generous financial assistance would be needed to encourage local authorities to accept the burden. *The London Joint Committee*, while recommending the introduction of repetitive mechanical work, pointed out that this would involve heavy capital expenditure on plant and machinery, considerable research and experiment, a high degree of expert technical supervision and also an extensive sales organisation for the economic disposal of the large quantities of goods likely to be produced. They thought the failure to introduce new trades might to some extent be the result of unwillingness on the part of the workshops to consider the employment of relatively large numbers of sighted personnel or to pay salaries at the levels required to attract suitably qualified technical staff. They pointed out that it was becoming difficult to recruit experienced instructors, foremen and supervisors in the traditional trades, because these were dying out; this difficulty would not arise with modern trades.

17. Most witnesses felt unable to put forward positive suggestions for the introduction of particular new trades or processes and considered that this should be the business of some special research or advisory service. Most thought the introduction of new kinds of work would be easier if more sighted disabled workers were introduced into the workshops for the blind, but the *National League*, while agreeing that a greater variety of jobs would be possible if able-bodied and not seriously handicapped workers were introduced to carry out processes which the blind could not themselves undertake, thought severely disabled sighted persons would be unable to make a contribution to such a development.

18. There was a good deal of support among Associations for the idea of sub-contracting or sponsorship arrangements with ordinary industry, though the *C.C.A.* pointed out this might lead to difficulties in a recession. *The Scottish National Institution for the War Blinded* gave some examples of contracts (carton manufacture, and sealing of plastic caps for a refrigerating company) which had been undertaken by their sheltered workshops at Linburn.

19. Evidence was received from several workshops which had undertaken the introduction of new work. Without exception they emphasised that the blind workers concerned had welcomed the change and been glad to give up traditional craftwork. They all stressed, however, the heavy capital costs incurred and the marketing problems which resulted from increased output.

20. The *Northampton* workshop sent written evidence concerning its experience in introducing a mechanised toilet soap department. This was now self-supporting and paying all

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

workers a full weekly wage, above the usual blind workshop minimum, without augmentation. The initial cost of the machinery and equipment, employing 14 blind or sighted disabled workers, had been over £12,000. Additional machinery, now being installed, would cost £13,000; this would however enable the labour force to be increased to 30. Further heavy expenditure had been involved in buildings and adaptations and in the financing of stocks of raw materials and finished goods. It was estimated that the ultimate capital cost might be £3,000 per employee, but that this would yield a good return. In the light of their experience the Northampton Workshop's view was that "highly mechanised trades appear to be the answer for reducing the ever increasing losses being incurred in sheltered workshops. The use of suitable machinery is psychologically beneficial to the blind and reduces training periods to a minimum. The goods must be of high quality and, if possible, rapidly expendable. A first-class sales organisation is the most important factor involved". It was considered that it was the problem of disposing of the output which had deterred many workshops from mechanisation; it had been solved in Northampton's case partly by the organisation of door-to-door sales.

21. The *Bristol* workshop, which gave written and oral evidence, is the only one in this country which has developed a light engineering department. They stated that it had been started in 1955 in a very small way and built up slowly, but it had recently been enlarged and rehoused in a new building. The machines at present in use include a considerable variety of lathes (some fully automatic), milling, drilling, grinding, tapping and finishing machines, with all necessary auxiliary and inspection equipment. The capital cost had been £35,000 to £36,000. The department at present employs 19 blind workers and three sighted disabled. There had been some difficulty in securing sufficient work, especially for the automatic machines. Long runs were desirable if the machines were to be fully economic, but these runs were not easy to obtain. They were hoping to produce in the future an article which had been patented and which should prove more remunerative than sub-contract work.

22. In oral evidence, representatives of the Bristol workshop emphasised the difficulties likely to be experienced by a workshop venturing into a new industrial field, if there was nowhere for the management to go for initial advice. They also stated, however, that despite the difficulties experienced and the fact that the engineering department was not yet fully productive, it was already a much more economic unit than the long standing traditional craft departments. It had absorbed some blind workers who had not been too successful in traditional trades, but were found to be capable of good machine work under sheltered conditions, though unlikely to be able to hold their own on the same type of work in outside industry, and also some newly blind rehabilitees who could not be placed in open employment.

23. Written and oral evidence was also received from the *Hull* workshop, which had introduced mechanised processes into its brush and machine knitting departments and had also developed a new line of production (fibre and plastic fabric covered furniture) which was more profitable and yielded better earnings to the blind than the traditional trades and decreased augmentation costs. They claimed that 80 per cent. of their production was radically different from what it had been ten years previously and that, as a result, the cost of employment had risen much less than in other workshops over the same period. Much of the new work was very simple and it had been possible to absorb blind people who were unable to maintain a reasonable standard of output on traditional processes. Training periods were much shorter on the new kinds of work than on the old. The main limiting factors in the introduction of new processes had been, first, the capital required, not only for plant and buildings (on which £41,000 had been spent in ten years towards which grants of some £10,000 had been made available), but also to finance stocks and work in progress, and second, the problem of marketing, particularly the output of the mechanised brush shops. The *Dundee* workshop stated that it was producing spring-interior mattress units and experimenting with the assembly of metal framed wire mattresses, and that a good deal had been done to break jobs down into simple repetitive operations; but it, too, pointed out that mechanisation and new industries brought problems in disposing of increased output.

24. The Working Party's attention was drawn to an article in the R.N.I.B. magazine, the "New Beacon" of October, 1961, about the manufacture of cardboard boxes in the *Leicester* workshop, which has been engaged in this trade since 1935. Both rigid and wire stitched boxes are made. The same machinery as in ordinary industry is used by blind operatives without adaptation. Training takes only about six months, although each trainee has to learn how to operate at least four types of machine. The Department has 23 workers (both

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

men and women) many of whom were formerly on traditional trades, but who now much prefer machine work. In the previous year, 800,000 boxes had been produced and sales had amounted to £15,000.

25. Financially, the most successful of any department of any workshop for the blind is the plastic moulding department (first started more than 20 years ago) at the *London Association for the Blind*. This Department is now producing, on semi and fully automatic machines, not only combs, but high quality complex mouldings of such articles as transistor radio cabinets (together with such component parts as dials, knobs and clear windows), dominoes for the blind, lenses, etc. High frequency welding machines have also been introduced for the welding of P.V.C. products ancillary to the main flow of production. The layout and flow patterns of the department follow normal sound industrial practices. The quality of the products is such that the department is fully recognised within the trade and the orders received are mainly due to the quality of the work and the efficiency of production. The blind workers are paid on time rates and in many cases the whole wage is regarded as "earnings". There are a number of sighted finishers engaged on ancillary work. The department makes an overall profit (after payment of all overheads, allowances for depreciation, and all other expenditures), which helps to offset losses in other departments. In order to obtain this satisfactory financial position the Association has had to spend quite considerable amounts on the purchase of plant and equipment (the machinery and equipment in present use cost over £30,000 at the time of purchase) and has also had to provide working capital of upwards of £11,000 for materials and goods which are always on hand.

Training in the traditional trades

26. *Blind adolescents.* Most witnesses who expressed any views on the matter were dissatisfied with the effectiveness of the present arrangements in England and Wales for the training of blind adolescents in traditional trades in further education establishments up to the age of twenty-one years. *The N.A.W.B.* preferred the Scottish system, under which young blind people normally receive full-time education until the age of eighteen, and those entering sheltered employment receive training for it in the workshops after that age. They thought young people should preferably be trained at the workshop at which they would ultimately be employed and that the responsibility for training should rest on the Ministry of Labour. The same point was made by the *London Joint Committee* and by the *National League*, who regarded this as one of the first changes which should be made in the workshop system. They said there had been a number of cases where retraining in the workshop had been necessary when the young person entered employment. They agreed that vocational training should not normally begin before the age of eighteen.

27. *Adults.* There was much evidence that the adult trainees at present in the workshops were finding great difficulty in reaching the required qualifying standard in the existing crafts. It was generally agreed that the type and length of training at present offered in the workshops was often unsuited to the older entrant. Shorter training in limited parts of the craft was recommended by several Associations, though it was admitted that this did not always solve the problem. The *College of Teachers* favoured short courses for trainees who were not really capable of all-round training, but the *North Regional Association* considered that no trainee should be approved for employment unless he had complete knowledge of his craft. The *London Joint Committee* thought there were problems of providing suitable instructors in small departments and suggested the establishment of central training centres in suitably situated workshops.

C. MARKETING ARRANGEMENTS

28. Most of the organisations which gave evidence were concerned about the difficulties experienced by some workshops in marketing traditional products in recent years, and also about the further marketing problems created where mechanised or new trades were introduced, so that sales had to be undertaken over a much wider area than hitherto. The general view among organisations covering England and Wales was that there was much scope for improvements in selling organisation, including advertising, salesmanship, presentation and design, but that these were difficult, if not impossible, of achievement so long as marketing remained, except for Government contracts, a matter for individual workshops. It was pointed out that, especially where workshops were situated close together, they were bound

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

under the present system either to engage in undesirable competition with each other or to restrict their sales to a limited area. Joint sales schemes were generally favoured, but there was some disagreement about the field which they should cover.

29. *The C.C.A.* thought that there was a need for a central body to deal with large orders and bulk sales on a national basis for goods produced by mechanised processes; but that the workshops should not be absolved from responsibilities for marketing their own products and should initially attempt to meet a local demand, taking "advantage of the large reservoirs of sympathy which the public feel towards the handicapped". However, the *A.M.C.* thought that very few workshops were large enough to warrant the expense of a selling organisation. They pointed out that even where workshops had built up a substantial business in their own areas, this was often not enough to maintain full employment, and that the more efficient the workshop in maintaining output the greater the difficulty. They thought this showed the need for a "national or area" selling scheme, supported by the Ministry of Labour with advertising and publicity at a national level. The *A.M.C.* representatives were asked, during oral evidence, whether local authorities generally were likely to agree to such a joint marketing scheme; they said they thought it would be acceptable if the authorities were satisfied that it would improve the operation of the workshops and be in the interests of the blind; authorities realised that the present system was not satisfactory.

30. The *N.A.W.B.* thought that regional sales organisations should be established as an immediate measure to improve marketing; that the success of such schemes would depend on standardisation of manufacture and efficient administration; and that they should include the bulk buying of raw materials. They expressed the view that the cost of introducing and maintaining a scheme of this sort should be more than offset by the economies which would follow. When their representatives were asked, in oral evidence, why, if such schemes were favoured by the Association, no such organisations had yet been set up (except in London), they replied that workshop managements and local authorities had generally been opposed to such schemes, but that a strong recommendation from the Working Party might change their views. They did not think a national scheme would be feasible until some measure of standardisation of products had been achieved on a regional basis. The *North Regional Association* also favoured a marketing organisation, but expressed the view, in oral evidence, that it would have to be centralised and be imposed upon workshops, who should be told what to produce. It was mentioned that a joint selling scheme set up in the North of England on a voluntary basis had been a failure. The *R.N.I.B.* also thought there should be a central organisation responsible for marketing arrangements, which should be undertaken by experts; regional or national sales schemes must be recognised by the constituent members as having overall authority.

31. In Scotland thoughts ran more to the extension of inter-trading between workshops than to central sales organisations. The *Scottish J.I.C.* said, in oral evidence, that they had set up a committee to consider inter-trading, bulk buying and joint price lists, but were doubtful about the need for a national or regional organisation. The *Association of County Councils in Scotland* were also against centralised marketing on the ground that the five workshops in Scotland were well scattered and each served local demands; their representatives agreed, however, in oral evidence that if new trades were introduced, or if it was decided that each workshop should concentrate on a more limited range of trades, joint marketing arrangements would be essential. The *Scottish Federation*, however, favoured a Scottish sales organisation; they pointed to the importance of quality and design, and wanted investigations made into the possibilities of obtaining sub-contract work of a type which involved processes suitable for blind workers; and they thought the possibility of obtaining export orders should be examined.

32. In general, comments from individual workshops were along the lines of those for national organisations. The *Birmingham* workshop pointed out that workshops were only interested in a national selling scheme where local difficulties were being experienced in selling their goods, and that a central organisation would be successful only if it could exercise control and direction over workshops. Evidence from workshops which had introduced new mechanised processes confirmed that marketing had been a major difficulty. The *Northampton* workshop said they had examined many trades, a number of which were quite suitable for the blind, but had finally decided on soap production solely because there seemed prospects of marketing the output through door-to-door sales. They considered that if workshops generally went in for mass production, a national sales scheme would be essential. The *Hull* workshop stated that following the loss of a Government contract they had had insufficient markets for their mechanised brush department, for a considerable

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

time, despite the appointment of a special salesman. They thought there was a case for a regional or national marketing organisation but that it should not supersede local marketing arrangements, such as their Buy from the Blind Guild.

33. Evidence was received from the *Joint London Committee* about the only existing regional sales organisation, the United London Workshops for the Blind (Sales) Limited, which had since 1936 been responsible for sales of all baskets, bedding, brushes, and ships' fenders made by four London workshops. They had found that this centralised selling was of a considerable value. The cost of sales had been considerably reduced by the reduction of sales staff, they were able to take contracts which would have been too large for any one workshop, long-run orders had enabled efficiency of production to be increased, goodwill had been created by the elimination of competition and common prices for like products had been established. They were inclined to favour regional organisations rather than a national scheme. They had not undertaken central buying on any large scale. It was pointed out, however, that the Tottenham Court Road Workshop had not joined the United London Sales organisation, taking the view that sales should be kept within the workshop's control: it considered that profits on small orders were often larger than on bigger ones and that if mechanisation were introduced each workshop could afford its own marketing organisation.

34. There were varying views about the desirability of workshops relying on retail sales. The *C.C.A.* wanted a further development of sales of dockets exchangeable for workshop products and renting of stalls in local markets; but the *Scottish J.I.C.* objected to "sale-of-work and bazaar methods of selling" on the ground that they disturbed the wholesale trade. The *College of Teachers* thought that non-blind made goods should play a less prominent part in retail sales than was sometimes the case.

35. On the question of door-to-door sales, the *R.N.I.B.* wished to see all such sales of blind-made goods eliminated; but the *N.A.W.B.*, although against door-to-door sales by traders, did not object to the workshops themselves organising this form of selling. The *National League* expressed the view that the handing over of marketing to private firms led to over-charging and damaged the commercial reputation of the workshops as a whole.

D. GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

36. A number of workshops and organisations were critical of the fact that only 10 per cent. of workshop products were disposed of through Government contracts. They objected to having to submit tenders in competition with other priority suppliers and with the trade and thought that the prices offered were unreasonably low. The *Scottish J.I.C.* considered that the low profit margins on Government bedding contracts had been a factor in the rising cost of providing employment in the workshops. The *Hull* workshop did not criticise the prices, but made the point that it would be helpful if Government contracts could be placed for a period of three to five years, which would enable workshops to buy raw materials in bulk and plan production over a period. The system of occasional contracts did not allow this and recently the *Hull* workshop had suffered a severe financial loss from the transfer to Remploy of an order which they had previously held for some years. Some workshops and organisations also referred to competition for Government contracts from H.M. Prisons. On both these subjects, the Working Party was provided by the Ministry of Labour with information previously laid before the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled. This is summarized below.

Summary of Consideration by the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled of the Allocation of Government Contracts to Sheltered Workshops

(a) General

37. Sheltered workshops (Remploy factories, workshops for the blind, and other workshops for the disabled receiving grant from the Ministry of Labour) rank equally with H.M. Prisons as "priority suppliers" for purposes of Government contracts. Sometimes they are offered such contracts at a price fixed by the purchasing Departments; more often they are required to submit tenders in the same way as commercial firms, but may be given a second chance to tender at a lower price if the prices tendered by the trade are lower than those submitted in the first instance by priority suppliers.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

38. Following allegations that Government contracts were commonly offered to sheltered workshops at unreasonably low prices which they were unable to accept, a special investigation was undertaken by purchasing Departments in 1959 to ascertain how the allocation of contracts for which sheltered workshops tendered during 1958/59 would have been affected had various price margins been allowed (ranging up to 20 per cent.). The Ministry of Works, the largest customer of the priority suppliers, was unfortunately unable to supply this information, but it is known to place as much work with the suppliers as possible. Other purchasing Departments were able to produce full figures which showed that the extra work which would have gone to sheltered workshops if a 10 per cent. price preference had been granted would have amounted to only £20,000; and that even with a 20 per cent. preference the increase in work would have been only £63,000—a small figure when compared with the total of £1,501,000 for work on Government contracts actually awarded to workshops in the same year.

39. It seemed clear that Departments were, in general, offering contracts to priority suppliers, where they could meet delivery and other requirements, at the trade price, even where workshops had originally quoted higher prices; and that these offers were usually accepted where the offered price was not greatly different from that tendered. Cases were, however, found, particularly among the smaller workshops, where the workshop's original tender price was 50 to 100 per cent. in excess of the general level of trade tenders; in such cases workshops might well feel unable to accept a second offer of the contract at the trade price.

40. The survey also showed that some, thought not all, purchasing Departments had a habit of sending out offers of contracts to a number of priority suppliers, although only one could be successful. This might well have given the workshops an exaggerated idea of the number of contracts lost on grounds of price.

41. The results of the survey were laid before the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled in June, 1960. The Council agreed that the main conclusions to be drawn were:

(1) A price preference would be unlikely substantially to increase the volume of work going to sheltered workshops unless the preference were very large indeed. In that case, it would be open to objection as affording a second substantial subsidy to undertakings which were already assisted from public funds.

(2) Some sheltered workshops, as at present equipped and organised, could not hope to compete for certain types of Government contracts—due sometimes to inefficiency, but more often to the difficulty which the small-scale producer, often employing old-fashioned methods, commonly has in competing with larger concerns.

(3) There was nevertheless scope for improvement in the arrangements for allocating Government contracts to sheltered workshops. The work of the Priority Suppliers Committee should be continued and further developed: in addition, efforts should be made to persuade purchasing Departments to reduce the amount of competitive tendering, particularly as between different priority suppliers, and to make available more contracts on an "offered price" basis.

(4) The great need of sheltered workshops was for a steady flow of regular work. It had been suggested that there ought to be more "monopoly" arrangements like that whereby H.M. Prisons supply the whole Post Office demand for mailbags, but, on examination by the Priority Suppliers Committee, there seemed little further scope for arrangements on these lines. A wider extension of long-term or standing contracts seemed, however, both practicable and desirable, and should be explored with purchasing Departments.

42. Representatives of the Ministry of Labour and the purchasing Departments have since had informal discussions which showed that the placing of contracts with priority suppliers at an offered price or on sole tender was more widespread than had been thought and that the practices were being extended.

(b) Competition Between H.M. Prisons and Sheltered Workshops

43. In recent years there have been complaints, in Parliament and elsewhere, that sheltered workshops were losing contracts to H.M. Prisons because the latter have no wages costs

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

and are therefore in a position to submit lower tenders. In February, 1958, the Home Secretary announced that the Prison Commission would review the question io consultatioo with the Ministry of Labour.

44. In the course of these consultations it was confirmed that prison tenders for Government and other public (but not private) contracts are based on cost of materials, plus a percentage for other costs, but include nothing for prisoners' labour.

45. It was clear that on this basis the Prisons would normally be able to underbid sheltered workshops. On the other hand, information collected for the special investigation of the allocation of Government contracts for priority suppliers (see above) had shown that, in practice, sheltered workshops did receive substantial contracts in fields of possible prison competition. It was evident that other factors were at work.

46. It was therefore decided to seek further information from purchasing Departments, who were asked whether it was their normal practice to invite tenders for the same contracts both from the prisons and from sheltered workshops; whether, if so, it was their practice invariably to allocate the contracts to the prisons, if theirs was the lowest tender; whether the price quoted by the prisons was ever used as a basis on which contracts were offered to other priority suppliers; and to give a list of contracts for which both prisons and sheltered workshops had tendered during 1958/9, stating the price each tendered and the allocation of the contract.

47. The replies showed that:

(1) Most Government Departments do not normally ask prisons and sheltered workshops to tender for the same contracts. One or two Departments, however, do so regularly and most do so occasionally.

(2) Where competitive tenders are invited, the lowest is normally accepted if it meets the purchasing Department's requirements.

(3) Where competitive tenders are invited, the prices quoted by the Prison Commission are usually, though not invariably, lower (often much lower) than those quoted by sheltered workshops.

(4) It is not the practice of any Government Department to use a prison price as the basis of a second offer to a sheltered workshop.

48. It was evident that the danger of undercutting of sheltered workshops by the prisons had been mitigated because of the limited extent to which they were in practice asked to compete but that it did nevertheless exist.

49. Following this investigation, which was reported to the National Advisory Council in June, 1960, there were further discussions between representatives of the Ministry of Labour and the Prison Commission. The latter said that in principle they accepted the undesirability of competition with sheltered workshops. They offered to withdraw as soon as possible from tenders for any Government or other public contracts for brushes or baskets, and for contracts for mats from local authorities, nationalised industries or Hospital Boards, so as to avoid competition with workshops for the blind. The N.A.W.B., for their part, agreed to recognise the Prisons as the normal suppliers of mats for Government contracts (as they had been in practice for many years).

50. The first Report of the Advisory Council on the Employment of Prisoners (published in September, 1961) recommended an expansion of prison production in some fields, but emphasised (in paragraph 54) the need to avoid competition with sheltered workshops.

E. THE WAGES SYSTEM

51. Most witnesses were critical of the existing wages system under which "earnings", based on trade rates for the job, are assessed for each individual, who is then given "augmentation" to being his wage packet up to at least a "minimum wage" based upon the wages for Local Authority manual workers. The main criticisms were that it hindered maximum production, put up the cost of providing employment, and was difficult to apply to non-traditional trades.

52. An exception was the *National League*, which was "emphatically of the opinion that the present system should be maintained", but that the minimum wage should be allied to

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

the (higher) Group IV (not, as is usual at present, Group II) rates paid to municipal manual workers, and should be supplemented by an incentive bonus of 6d. for every 1s. of earnings in excess of a locally negotiated figure, which should not exceed the minimum earnings standard expected of new entrants. This was regarded as a policy for the immediate future only; "the steady increase which has taken place in National Assistance Scales is actually financially penalising many blind workshop employees: and the ultimate aim should be . . . a wage equal to the average paid in outside industry." In written evidence, the League stated that it was important to retain the distinction between earnings and augmentation, since "it is desirable that blind workers should be aware of the value of the work they are producing"; the system helped costing, and it was "a good thing that blind workers should have an interest . . . in securing wage and other improvements in the industries in which they are employed." However, in oral evidence, representatives of the League agreed that if mechanised trades were introduced (which they would support), it would not be possible to assess individual earnings, and said they would have no objection to ending the present separation into earnings and augmentation, even though this would mean that no part of the wage was tax-free, provided that the total wage-packet was adequate.

53. The *C.C.A.*, while considering that the increases in augmentation in recent years largely accounted for the rise in the cost of providing employment, thought the present system, though difficult to apply to newer trades, had merits as assuring a reasonable living standard and a method of assessment ensuring that the value of a man's work could be kept under review: however, they would support in principle the withdrawal of the tax privilege arising from augmentation if the workers' net income and the incentive to increase production were not thereby reduced. They also agreed in principle with incentive bonus schemes, but thought they should be on a group rather than an individual basis. In oral evidence, representatives were asked why they considered it necessary to distinguish between earnings and augmentation in workshops for the blind, but not in the workshops for the tuberculous for which they were also responsible. They replied that the latter were run by local authorities, but most of the workshops for the blind with which C.C.A. members were concerned were run by voluntary associations, and the financial arrangements with them would be difficult if augmentation were abolished.

54. The *A.M.C.*, in written evidence, pointed out the tendency, under the present system, for workers to limit their output, but considered this could be overcome by incentive bonus schemes, and that the augmentation system should remain. In oral evidence, however, their representatives expressed the view that perhaps the time had come to move away from the augmentation system and pay the blind ordinary wages like other disabled people.

55. The *N.A.W.B.* expressed the view in written evidence that blind workers should receive only their actual earnings at trade rates, which should be supplemented by a State pension or disability allowance paid separately. In oral evidence, their representatives said that this would probably have to be about £5 or £6 per week if blind workers were to be no worse off than at present. They also drew attention to a memorandum which the Association had previously put forward to the Local Authorities' Advisory Committee, in which they strongly criticised the present system on the ground that it discouraged production, since there was no relationship between earnings and payment; and the fact that augmentation was tax-free meant that an increase in earnings could actually reduce net pay. The memorandum had proposed a new wages system (not accepted by the L.A.A.C.) under which a "basic standard wage" would be fixed, which would exceed by a certain percentage (e.g. 255 per cent. for basketmaking) the qualifying standard of earnings in the trade concerned; this would be paid to all workers reaching the qualifying standard and they would get additional payments in respect of earnings more than 10 per cent. in excess of that standard. Future changes in workshop wages would be related to movements in trade rates and not, as at present, to movements in municipal wages for manual workers. They pointed out that in successive years the latter had been increased (a) to cover increases in the cost of living and (b) to attract labour into local authority employment. Blind workers had had the advantage under both heads though strictly there was no justification under (b). The process had, they thought, largely accounted for the steady rise in cost of employment, though increased overheads had contributed to it.

56. *The London Joint Committee* considered that the present wages structure was "highly unsatisfactory and a major contribution to the problems which confront workshop managements today". In their view it had "destroyed all incentive" since many workers looked on the minimum wage as their "just entitlement irrespective of thier contribution to production". They thought it was no solution to impose incentive bonus schemes on this "demoralising structure".

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

57. *The College of Teachers* were also convinced that the existing wages system discouraged output. In written evidence they stated that "it is most frustrating to the Instructor to train pupils up to a level of quality and earning ability to be told by the pupil at a later stage that he is sorry to let him down and give to the Instructor the reason for his drop in earnings is deliberate because other workers decline to earn to a level which will bring them within P.A.Y.E. Under present day working a man can produce more than his fellow worker yet actually find less money in his pay packet at the end of the week". They considered that the principle of augmentation should remain, but that the expected standard of earnings should be fixed for each man individually and there should also be some monetary incentive to build up quality and speed in production.

58. *The National Federation* also considered it unsatisfactory that under the existing system augmentation decreases in direct relation to increased production, and suggested that augmentation be paid in strict relation to earnings—say 2s. for each 1s. earned.

59. *The Directors of Welfare Services* said that the present system allowed blind workers to take home reasonable remuneration for minimum effort. When an incentive bonus scheme was introduced it was generally based on paying bonus above existing levels of production and so was unduly expensive. They favoured individual minimum earnings standards and thought consideration might be given to the Remploy system of paying wages with a hidden subsidy, or to fixed augmentation.

60. *The R.N.I.B.* suggested that "the system of remuneration should be such that maximum effort is rewarded, for example, a basic wage for everyone plus all or some proportion of their actual piece-work earnings".

61. The Scottish organisations were also critical of the existing system, but did not suggest any major change. (In Scotland the minimum wage is higher than in most parts of England and Wales, and all workshops operate a system of additional bonus payments for earnings in excess of the qualifying standard for the trade, which is usually about 30 per cent. of the minimum wage; it is also possible to reduce take-home pay if earnings fall below this standard.) *The Counties of Cities Association* considered that the system was "difficult of equitable application to individual trades, . . . and also presents problems on the introduction of sighted disabled". Their representatives agreed, in oral evidence, that it was an obstacle to the introduction of new trades, but nevertheless they thought it had certain advantages and that, although it was not a system they would use if starting afresh, it would be inadvisable to try to change it now. Similar views were expressed by the *Association of County Councils in Scotland. The Scottish J.I.C.* commented on "the ever widening gap between earnings and minimum wages", but thought it essential to continue to relate wages in the workshops to piece-rates fixed for the same work by trade union agreements. *The Scottish Federation of the Blind* said they regarded wages as a matter between the employers and the trade unions, but felt that the introduction of new types of work would necessitate a new wages structure. *The Edinburgh* workshop commented that under the Scottish bonus scheme a worker in a bedding department could earn £3–£4 per week bonus, whereas basket makers could not hope to earn more than 30s. This was considered unfair since the latter work requires more skill and ability.

62. Other individual workshops submitting evidence generally remarked on the ever widening gap between real earnings and the minimum wage. A number favoured the adoption of higher minimum qualifying standards, regular adjustment to keep them in some relation to the minimum wage, and exclusion of workers unable to reach them. Others urged the adoption of a nationally agreed incentive bonus scheme instead of locally agreed schemes varying from place to place. Examples of such schemes, which illustrate the wide variation at the present time, were given in evidence as follows. At *Sheffield* all earnings in excess of minimum qualifying standards (which are higher than in most workshops) are added to the minimum wage. Thus augmentation has become a flat payment. Under this system real earnings increased by 115 per cent. between 1948 and 1959, compared with an average of 63 per cent. in all workshops for the blind. At *Hull* workers receive in addition to the minimum wage two-thirds of all earnings above the minimum qualifying standard. This was said to have stepped up output. At *Birmingham* workers receive in addition to the minimum wage 50 per cent. of earnings above the figure (uniform for all trades) of £2 2s. 0d. for men and £1 1s. 0d. for women until take-home pay exceeds £12 16s. 3d.; thereafter the bonus is reduced but is always at least £1 in excess of real earnings. At *Ipswich* workers receive in addition to the minimum wage 25 per cent. of all earnings above a standard output. There may also be a deduction from the minimum wage where output falls below the standard.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

63. In general, the workshops' evidence discussed the wages system only in the context of the traditional trades, but there was some mention of its application to new trades and processes. The *Hull* workshop stated that in their mechanised brush shop, sawmill and furniture departments no difficulty had arisen in fixing satisfactory piece-work rates and qualifying standards by local agreement. Elsewhere however there had been difficulties. The *Bristol* workshop explained, in written and oral evidence, that in the early days of its light engineering department earnings were assessed by reference to the previous earnings of workers who had been transferred from traditional trades. In 1960 the Ministry of Labour suggested that the time had come for earnings to be assessed on the basis of what would be paid in ordinary industry, but it had been found impossible to arrive at any fair assessment and finally piece-rates had been fixed designed to yield the blind workers £6 per week earnings—a quite arbitrary figure. In oral evidence, representatives of the workshop stated that in their view it was impossible fairly to apply the traditional wages system to non-traditional trades where there were no nationally agreed piece-rates. At *Northampton* the problem had been solved, in the new mechanised soap department, by treating the entire wage packet as earnings; a "basic bonus", of 7s. a week, had been added to the usual minimum wage, to offset the greater liability to income tax, and there was an additional bonus on output.

64. There was some evidence of dissatisfaction at the present method of settling remuneration and other conditions of employment in workshops for the blind in England and Wales by the Local Authorities' Advisory Committee. *The National League* advocated the creation of a Joint Industrial Council on the lines of that already operating in Scotland. They drew attention to the fact that a provisional J.I.C. had been established in 1947, covering the L.C.C. area and that of five neighbouring authorities, in anticipation of the establishment of a National J.I.C. and that when this did not materialise (due to opposition from the local authority associations) the provisional J.I.C. continued to function. The idea of a national J.I.C. was supported by evidence from several individual workshops and from the *North Regional Association*, who stated that at a special conference of representatives of local authorities and voluntary organisations, the following resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority:

> "That the County Councils Association and the Association of Municipal Corporations be requested to take steps together with the National Association of Workshops for the Blind and the Minister of Labour to bring about the establishment of a Joint Industrial Council for blind workers employed under sheltered conditions."

65. The *C.C.A.* did not refer in their evidence to the question of a J.I.C. The *A.M.C.* commented that "as 'augmentation' is an unearned grant from public funds it is not considered to be susceptible of 'negotiation' in the same way as ordinary wages or salary"; they considered that the Local Authorities' Advisory Committee provided adequately for consultation with the National League.

F. MANAGEMENT IN WORKSHOPS: NEED FOR SPECIALISATION, GROUPING AND AMALGAMATION

66. There was general agreement among witnesses that changes were needed in the management of the workshops.

67. The *National League* stated in written evidence: "In our view, the failure of the workshops to reflect the developments which have taken place in industry throughout this period is due to a number of causes which can be summarised as follows: (a) that each workshop is under a separate committee of management; (b) that owing to the fact that they were originally established as charitable organisations (as most of them continue to be) members of these bodies do not possess the necessary qualifications—technical or otherwise—to enable them to develop the workshops along progressive lines; (c) that as a result, the managers appointed, with a few exceptions, lack managerial qualifications and commercial experience and, in the case of the voluntary workshops, have often to devote part of their time to organising charitable appeals; (d) that even if the management committees had the necessary expert guidance upon which to draw, they would not be able to benefit from it as except in the case of a very few workshops, they do not have the financial resources to carry out large-scale research and experiment into the possibilities offered by new forms of employment." They considered that the long-term policy should be for each workshop to specialise in one or two industries.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

68. In oral evidence, their representatives said that there were too many small workshops, but that hardship would be caused if they were concentrated so that blind people had much longer journeys to work; it would be better to have a system of regional management, with one manager in charge of three or four workshops. They said that, at present, it was quite common to appoint someone as manager who had started as an office boy; and in considering applications, knowledge of blind persons was emphasised at the expense of knowledge of industry. They would like to see men appointed who had had industrial and managerial experience and who would be on a par with managers of industrial undertakings. They agreed that such people were not at present attracted to workshops, not only because the salaries were insufficient, but also because small workshops offered little scope for initiative and expansion.

69. *The National Federation* urged that workshop management committees should include people with extensive industrial experience both on the production and commercial sides. They also advocated more joint consultation in the workshops, and more opportunities for promotion for the blind (a point also made by the National League).

70. Representatives of the *N.A.W.B.*, in oral evidence, agreed that it was desirable for managers to have experience of industry, but said that salaries were not sufficient to attract such people; they should also have a knowledge of accountancy and administration and a calling for the work. They, too, considered that some trades could with advantage be concentrated in certain workshops best fitted to undertake them, "especially in those areas where there are adequate travelling facilities for blind workers", but this was, they thought, a long-term project which would require careful study. They pointed out that much work devolved on foremen and that it would be of advantage if they could have refresher courses.

71. *The North Regional Association* recommended that candidates for managerial positions should have studied cost accountancy, personnel management and organisation, as well as the trades and industries practised in the workshops, and that managers of workshops employing 25 or more blind persons should not have to undertake any additional duties or responsibilities. They thought periodical conferences of managers and foremen, with speakers from outside industry, would help workshops to keep abreast of modern developments; in oral evidence, they also suggested a national training scheme for managers. They favoured fewer and larger workshops, particularly in their own area of the North of England, where there are at present no less than 29 workshops (out of a total of 55 in England), including 12 with less than 30 blind workers and two with less than five workers. They pointed to the heavy overhead charges to which such small workshops were liable, and were inclined to the view that 25–30 blind workers should be the minimum. They also suggested that: "One of the contributory factors to higher standards of efficiency of the workshops, economically and otherwise, could arise from the regrouping of the workshops on a regional basis of one industry for one workshop, i.e. seven principal workshops instead of twenty-nine as there are at present. Alternatively, the grouping of two or three small workshops under a General Manager, each workshop producing or manufacturing one article might lead to more efficiency and economy."

72. *The Directors of Welfare Services* also suggested more specialisation by workshops in particular trades, and thought the principle might be advocated of one workshop, one trade, with collective marketing arrangements and group managers responsible for several workshops, for whom a sufficiently realistic salary could be offered to attract a candidate with business skill. They considered that "few workshops have available to them advice from competent business executives".

73. Representatives of the *A.M.C.* were asked, when giving oral evidence, whether they considered that local authorities would agree to joint management of groups of workshops; they thought such arrangements might be acceptable if the authorities were satisfied they were in the workshops' interests. They pointed out that joint action by local authorities was becoming usual in many fields.

74. In Scotland, there was less interest in grouping and amalgamation, no doubt because workshops there are generally larger and further apart than in England. *The Scottish Federation* said that there was already close co-operation between the Scottish workshops, but that there was scope for concentration of effort by reducing the number of different departments in each workshop. The individual workshops at *Aberdeen*, *Dundee* and *Inverness* also favoured reducing the variety of industries and concentrating workshop production on items which could be produced in large quantities. Representatives of the *Scottish Counties of Cities Association*, on the other hand, thought that, as there were so few workshops in Scotland, there was no need for further concentration of trades.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

G. THE NEED FOR A CENTRAL ORGANISATION

75. A recurring motif in much of the evidence submitted was the desire for some central organisation to guide and assist individual workshops; though opinions varied about its precise functions and about how it should be constituted.

76. For example, the *C.C.A.* suggested that a consortium (including Government officials, representatives of local authorities and blind persons, managers of workshops and representatives of industry) should be set up to initiate and co-ordinate research into new trades, design of machinery, production methods, new processes and methods of exploiting the capabilities of combined workshops (i.e. sighted disabled combined with blind). They considered that the representatives of industry would be particularly important to the success of the consortium in advising upon modern production methods, in directing research into fields where there were opportunities for the combined workshops to participate in some stage of industrial production, and in bringing about a closer association of workshops and industrial concerns in a new climate arising from the ability of the combined workshops to accept contracts for complete stages of production. The Association also considered that: "there is need for a central body . . . to deal with large commodity orders, obtain Government contract work, direct planned production, etc., and to achieve general co-ordination. Now that mechanisation is essential for efficiency and economy there is need to decide the question of bulk sales on a national basis . . . and initiate and develop outwork schemes." In oral evidence, representatives of the Association said there should be a permanent national body with regional links, so that while large contracts could be accepted local markets could also be exploited.

77. The *N.A.W.B.* suggested a study group to recommend new trades and processes for introduction into the workshops.

78. The *National League* advocated the establishment by the Ministry of Labour of a "national development committee, with the financial resources to perform the following functions:

(a) To conduct research into the possibilities offered by the introduction of new industries and processes;

(b) To provide capital to meet the cost of the introduction of such industries and processes along with the necessary technical assistance;

(c) To investigate the value of sponsorship schemes on the lines operated by Remploy Limited;

(d) To organise marketing schemes on a national and/or regional basis;

(e) To organise publicity on a national scale.

"Such a committee should also include machinery for joint consultation with management and workers in order to enlist their co-operation in facilitating any changes which may be decided upon. In our opinion, it would also be desirable for the Ministry of Labour to exercise a greater measure of supervision and control over the workshops to bring about greater efficiency which would ensure, for example, that properly qualified managers and staff were appointed".

79. In oral evidence, representatives of the League said the essential service which such a body would provide was research into new industries, which should be undertaken nationally and the results made known to the workshops. The Committee should be composed of representatives of the Ministry of Labour, the local authorities, the N.A.W.B. and the National League of the Blind; it would need a permanent staff. It should have the power to make recommendations and see that they were implemented, and capital should be made available for any developments recommended.

80. *The Directors of Welfare Services* suggested that a "Central Advisory Board be established, on which business interest would be represented, to advise workshops on methods of production, overall selling arrangements and the best methods of obtaining new trades"; it might also deal with the question of allocation of Government contracts and advise on what grants should be made to local authorities in respect of the workshops.

81. *The R.N.I.B.* suggested that "there is need for the existing workshops to be reorganised to comply with a national scheme with a central authority", which would employ marketing experts.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

82. *The North Regional Association* suggested a "committee of experts in industry" who would carry out research into industry with a view to recommending occupations, trades or industries suitable for blind people and would examine the possibility of workshops for the blind taking contracts from local open industry.

83. *The Association of County Councils in Scotland* also suggested the establishment of an organisation to advise workshops on the introduction of new trades.

84. *The London Joint Committee* put forward detailed recommendations for the establishment of a central organisation, which should be "an independent body free from direct control by any of the parties concerned with the employment of the blind" and should be recognised as the "national policy-making body". While the existing autonomy of the workshops should be preserved, it was considered essential that in the last resort there should be some power to ensure compliance with important policy decisions. With this end in view, the Ministry of Labour should take account of the recommendations of the organisation in deciding on capital grants and the continued payment of capitation grants. The organisation should, they suggested, take the form of a company run by a Council of twenty-two members, including representatives of the Ministry of Labour, local authorities, workshop management and blind workers and also independent members drawn from industry and commerce. Its objects should include research into the problems of employment of the blind, advice on suitable trades, the promotion of more efficiency (including the initiation of amalgamations of workshops and standardisation of products); the determination of wages, and the promotion of centralised buying and marketing and of improvements in costing. The Council should have a full-time specialist and secretarial staff (about 12 employees) controlled by a director. The staff would include experts on marketing, costing, design, work study, research and development.

85. Comments on this plan were invited from *Mr. C. J. W. Cole*, of Messrs. Orwick, Orr and Partners, Management Consultants, who kindly agreed to give evidence to the Working Party. Mr. Cole said it appeared to him that there were two main problems—to improve efficiency in the workshops as they were at present, and to introduce new products, which would have to be a gradual process. He agreed that there ought to be a central organisation which would be in the main advisory, though there might be some financial sanctions exercised by the Ministry of Labour, especially where projects were put forward involving capital expenditure. It would be advisable to start with a small staff and build up gradually. There should be a chief executive with a staff of qualified and experienced executives as follows:

1. A marketing specialist with perhaps one or two assistants. It would be necessary to study the market and to consider the adequacy of design and selling methods of existing products, and later to develop new lines and persuade workshops to adopt them.
2. A personnel management adviser, who might also need one or two assistants. He would deal among other things, with the wages structure, including incentive bonus schemes, training for management and training techniques in the workshops.
3. A specialist in production, who would study and advise on such matters as work study methods, factory layout, production planning and stock control, and be prepared to assist managers on the spot.
4. Possibly someone responsible for central buying, though this would depend on the nature of the products.

A start should be made with marketing and with a training scheme for managers. He thought most managers would welcome specialist advice. The central body should participate in the appointment of managers; one member might perhaps travel round to local management committees to advise on appointments and help secure common standards.

86. *Mr. E. Chase* of the Production Engineering Research Association also gave evidence to the Working Party after visiting two workshops in the Midlands and after considering details which had been supplied to him of other workshops. He expressed the view that there was great scope for improvement in productivity, even in traditional trades. An increase of up to 40 per cent. might be obtainable. Some of the trades he had seen would never be likely to compete with the latest technical developments in open industry but the workshops should concentrate more on their most economic lines of production. The first task would be for experts to study each of the trades at present practised in order to ascertain which were the most economic, why different results were obtained from the same trade in different workshops, which were the best methods of manufacture and how efficient was

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

management and supervision. Such a survey would probably show that too many trades were being followed and that the smaller workshops should concentrate their activities on fewer trades. Work methods specialists could then work within the workshop organisation studying such things as lay-out, work flow and the best use of sighted persons. The introduction of merit ratings might be found to be worth while as these would allow for workers of varying abilities and would reward those who were doing their best within their capacity. A detailed examination would probably also show that marketing of the workshops' products was too local in character and that savings could be achieved by the bulk buying of raw materials. Only a detailed study on the spot could establish why any particular workshop was not operating successfully. The lack of consistency at the present time seemed to indicate the need for central direction.

H. THE EMPLOYMENT OF SEVERELY DISABLED SIGHTED PERSONS IN WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND

87. There was general agreement that sighted disabled persons should be admitted to workshops for the blind, if this could be done without detriment to the latter, and provided they could make a reasonable economic contribution. Many witnesses saw advantages in such an arrangement, which would diminish the degree of segregation of the blind from the rest of the community, and should also, they thought, make it easier to introduce new kinds of work. There was evidence in workshops where the experiment had been tried that personal relationships had been good, though there had been dissatisfaction where the wages and conditions of the sighted disabled were inferior to those of the blind.

88. The *C.C.A.* thought it was of "supreme importance" to introduce more sighted employees to the workshops, some of which might otherwise have to close because of falling numbers, and that these should be drawn principally from among other severely disabled persons, for whom the local authorities now had a statutory responsibility, as well as for the blind. It was logical to use existing workshops to capacity, and so save on new building and avoid undesirable trading competition between workshops for the blind and those for sighted disabled. They drew attention to the experience of the Glamorgan County Council workshops, where 15 sighted disabled persons were now employed alongside 58 blind persons, partly on work ancillary to the blind trades and partly in a separate department making aids for the disabled. In oral evidence, representatives of the Association said they considered that this experiment had worked well, although it had not so far resulted in any increase in employment possibilities for the blind and any financial benefits were only marginal.

89. The *A.M.C.* thought there should be no acute need for absorbing sighted disabled in workshops for the blind in areas served by Remploy factories, though they might fill vacancies for sighted operators on work complementary to that of the blind. They considered that the main difficulty of their introduction into workshops was to fix conditions of employment. If they were not given the same terms as the blind there would be dissatisfaction; but if the same terms were offered "the position regarding the high cost of employment would be aggravated". The Association nevertheless considered that despite the difficulties the combined employment of the two groups of disabled should be encouraged.

90. The *N.A.W.B.* stated that they were in favour of the admission of severely disabled persons, subject to priority being given to the blind, and that this had already been done in a few workshops, with successful results. Representatives of the *National League* stated in oral evidence that they would welcome sighted disabled persons who could perform operations the blind could not do, but experience had shown that they were rarely able to complement the work of the blind in the traditional trades. There were also difficulties arising from the lack of physical mobility. They thought there would be no objection to their inclusion if it led to more jobs.

91. *The North Regional Association* thought that the present workshops did not have the facilities, on any large scale, for the inclusion of the sighted disabled, but that in any future workshops full account should be taken of the possibilities. They considered that blind workshops should be primarily for the blind, and any extension of facilities to other disabled persons should only be offered subject to the interests of the blind being safeguarded. *The College of Teachers* made the same point, saying that safeguards should be taken to ensure that the proportion of sighted labour was not greater than the blind, and that their work was ancillary to and not in competition with the blind.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

92. *The Directors of Welfare Services*, like the *C.C.A.*, thought that the admission of the sighted disabled was essential to prevent closure of some workshops. They thought their admission had hitherto been limited mainly because of financial considerations. They feared that Remploy would continue to recruit the "better type of physically handicapped person", leaving local authorities to deal with the more difficult cases, requiring a heavy subsidy.

93. *The London Joint Committee* said that in their experience employment of the sighted disabled had "proved difficult owing to hazards involved in their working in close proximity to the blind and the problem of their lack of mobility, which render many of the existing workshop buildings unsuitable. Furthermore, many of the trades practised are not suitable for the severely disabled, a difficulty which is accentuated by the fact that at present it is usually the most distressing . . . cases which are offered to the workshops. It cannot therefore be considered that the employment of such severely disabled persons would help to solve any of the problems of blind workshops or contribute towards their economic operation, but would rather only add to the losses". They were, however, prepared to consider the employment of such persons "provided they are capable of achieving significant earnings".

94. *The Scottish J.I.C.* considered that the employment of sighted disabled people offered possibilities, but said it had been noted that their production did not exceed that of the blind. *The Convention of Royal Burghs* thought the combined provision of sheltered work for all classes of disabled might involve the provision of more workshops. *The Scottish Counties of Cities Association* were of the opinion that severely disabled sighted people should be employed in workshops wherever possible, and the *Association of County Councils in Scotland* took the same view; they thought it might well help the introduction of new and more profitable trades.

95. Most of the individual workshops presenting evidence also favoured the introduction of sighted disabled persons and were in fact already employing them or making plans to do so. The consensus of view was that the wider use of the sighted disabled would make it easier to introduce new types of work, on which the two groups would be complementary, but would not materially decrease the cost of employment. The undesirable effects of having different wages systems were frequently stressed. The *Birmingham* workshop supported the view of the *A.M.C.* that there were unlikely to be many suitable people available in areas served by Remploy factories.

96. The evidence from the *Portsmouth* workshop (which the Working Party visited) was of particular interest, since at this workshop a group of about 40 sighted disabled workers have been employed mainly in traditional trades, under an agency agreement with Remploy, since 1947, side by side with some 60 blind workers. It had been found that personal relationships were good and that the sighted disabled had been able to undertake certain types of work which were difficult for the blind and thus enabled the workshop to widen the scope of its activities. Difficulties had, however, arisen from the fact that the sighted disabled workers, as Remploy employees, received lower wages than the blind, although, until recently, their output had been higher. The *Portsmouth* workshop was strongly of the opinion that for complete success, a combined workshop must offer uniform conditions of service to all disabled employees.

97. The *Warrington* workshop gave an account of an experimental scheme for the employment of eight sighted disabled people in a separate department making paper bags. This had not been a financial success, but the employees were happy and their relationships with the blind were good. Here, too, there had been dissatisfaction because their wages and conditions were inferior to those of the blind.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 11

REPORT OF A SURVEY OF MANAGEMENT AND THE FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THIRTEEN SELECTED WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND

INTRODUCTION

1. The Working Party noted that there were wide disparities in the trading profits of workshops of similar size making similar products. It was thought that the reasons for these disparities should be examined.

2. The Ministry of Labour made available the services of two of its officers and a comprehensive survey of a selection of workshops for the blind was carried out between September and December, 1961. All aspects of management, supervision, methods of working, wages structure, costing and sales arrangements at thirteen workshops for the blind were investigated.

3. Workshops were selected solely on the basis of information given in the published annual accounts. Six local authority workshops and seven administered by voluntary organisations were chosen to cover all sizes of workshops and give examples of the best and worst trading results and net costs of employment. One week was devoted to each workshop and in that time an assessment was made of the effectiveness of production within the various departments, the quality and design of the articles produced, the methods of costing, the relationship between selling prices and true costs, marketing, the effects of incentive bonuses on production and on the workers' wage packet and all aspects of management, supervision and workshop discipline.

SUMMARY OF THE SURVEY OFFICER'S REPORT

4. In the course of the survey it very soon became clear that there is no simple explanation of the disparities in the costs of running workshops which on paper seem very similar. These thirteen workshops are entirely different organisations which have developed independently over many years, and each has its own way of doing things. A straightforward analysis of the workshops' accounts shows the total costs of providing employment in these workshops in the year ended March, 1961 to range from £236 to £586 per worker, but the circumstances of the workshops differ so much that comparisons on this basis are entirely misleading. Nor can the accounts be adjusted in order to make comparisons possible. As an example, the accounts of two neighbouring workshops, of comparable size with similar departments show the cost of providing employment at one to be £100 per worker more than at the other. The actual position is, in fact, very different. The workshop which appears to be the more expensive is carrying local authority charges for central administration of nearly £100 per worker per year, whereas the other, a voluntary society workshop, not only has no central administrative costs to bear but is also helped by the manager being a direct employee of the local authority; as such his salary is not shown in any part of the workshop accounts. Moreover the same local authority provides the voluntary society with rent-free premises and makes no charge for auditing and such like services. Even these items do not give the complete picture as one workshop has an incentive bonus scheme whereas the other has not; there are quite different attitudes to marketing and production; one is in a good purpose-built factory, whereas the other is in very unsatisfactory premises; and so on. The workshop which appears on paper to be the worse is in fact very much the better.

5. Another local authority workshop in the same area has to bear heavy central administrative charges, has no incentive bonus scheme, and has poor trading results, but counterbalances these to some extent by running a large retail shop with a very considerable turnover of factored goods not made by the blind. Thus it appears from the accounts to be a better production unit than is, in fact, the case. Even on the seemingly straightforward trading figures of materials and earnings against receipts from sales, the local conditions regarding the availability of markets, the quality of management, and the general policy towards such things as costings, time rates and incentive bonuses are completely different.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Premises

6. The premises in which the workshops are located vary from comparatively new purpose-built structures to old multi-storied buildings erected many years ago for quite different purposes. Most workshops are now a combination of new and old, but it is clear that it takes more than a good building to make a good workshop. There are high-cost departments housed in good buildings and much more efficient and less expensive departments in old and inconvenient buildings. Nor is the happiness and satisfaction of the workers related to the type of premises; management and general workshop policy are clearly much more important.

Management

7. The manager of a workshop for the blind has all the problems of a manager of a sighted factory and many more to add to them. He has to walk the usual managerial tightrope between too many and too few orders, each equally unfortunate, without the possibility of adding to or subtracting from his labour force, with little or no incentive to offer the workers to increase their production and with his direct authority dissipated by having to work through committees. Moreover many of his workers are not well suited to the handcrafts they are following and their high rate of absence presents problems in maintaining production schedules.

8. The development of workshops on an industrial basis from what were originally welfare establishments, and the reluctance at some levels to differentiate between these functions, are causing many difficulties for management. The job of workshop manager is entirely different from that of welfare officer and requires an entirely different background, training, personality and technique. In several of the workshops visited, in local authority workshops as well as those of voluntary societies, managers are trying to do both jobs and the division of interests can be seen to be unsatisfactory to all concerned. In this situation welfare interests tend to predominate and a welfare approach to an industrial situation can sometimes be seen. Most managers have had little or no formal training in industrial management; whatever experience they now have has been gained by the expensive method of trial and error.

9. Most of the managers of the local authority workshops visited have been recruited from voluntary societies. Several of the managers of voluntary workshops have similar backgrounds, but there are a few instances among the voluntary workshops where the manager has spent a lifetime in the one workshop working his way up from a junior position. There is nothing to show that there are advantages in recruiting from within the workshop organisation and it was found that previous experience as a foreman in one department of a workshop for the blind is not necessarily a managerial qualification. Other managers have been recruited direct from local authority staffs, but again there is nothing to suggest that this is an entirely satisfactory area for recruitment. Managers who have made good have done so much more because of their personalities and innate abilities than because of their background.

10. Managers seem to be looking for advice and are concerned about the future. Most of them realise that it is uneconomic to disperse their small labour force between several small departments, but there is little evidence of moves towards rationalisation. They want to develop their marketing but are often confined to their own geographical areas where opportunities are limited; even so there seems to be little sign of dynamic sales policies to which balanced production could be geared. They say they want new industries, but there seems to be little positive effort towards finding something suitable. They complain about the price they can get for some of their traditional products, but uneconomic lines are not always being dropped and new work is still being accepted without regard to its value to the workshop from the point of view either of profitability or of the organisation of production. Foremen and supervisors are not always given the control they need and are sometimes left too much to their own devices; untidiness and uneconomic working result.

Supervision

11. Supervision varies from very good to practically non-existent. The best foremen are running their departments as if they were their own businesses and although they have few real disciplinary measures at their disposal they manage to keep a steady flow of production. Others are much more the fetchers and carriers for the workers.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

12. The recruitment of foremen is causing concern in many workshops. The wages paid are as low as £11 per week, but even at the more usual £12 to £14 they are not very attractive to good men with the necessary experience and background, especially as they have little opportunity of adding to their salaries by working overtime or by other means.

13. The recruitment of sighted assistant foremen of the right calibre is even more of a problem, as the wage of about £10 to £12 per week means that, after tax deductions, such a man often has a lower take-home pay than blind workers for whom he is responsible. The pay of foremen and assistants in relation to the tax free augmented earnings of the blind is causing real difficulties and is one of the reasons for a considerable amount of frustration in the workshops. Departments were found which have been running for many months without a foreman and as far as can be seen there is little hope of finding someone suitable. In the meantime a worker from the department is being given an extra few shillings a week to keep an eye on things. This is quite unsatisfactory as the acting foreman may still have his own full-time job to do and supervision disappears. There are instances where workers have been promoted from the shop floor. This in itself is no bad thing. Several registered blind persons were seen to be very satisfactory foremen, but in some cases there has been an element of desperation in the appointment and difficulties have been brought about mainly by management overlooking two important facts. Firstly the appointment was made only after months of unsuccessful advertising so that it was clearly seen to be a second best arrangement. Secondly the moving of a man who is on production one day into the foreman's office the next day, without any training, is not conducive to harmony on the shop floor. The workers resent the promoted man who they know, or think they know, is no more qualified for the job than they are themselves. They tend to by-pass the new foreman and confront the manager personally with the most trivial problems which could be cleared on the shop floor.

14. In general there seemed to be too many foremen. To have a foreman, often with an assistant, in every small department, sometimes with as few as seven or eight workers, is quite uneconomic. A good foreman can control up to fifty blind workers and if these workers are spread over several different trades it is of little handicap to a capable man, even if he is himself blind, for he can quickly assimilate enough of the techniques to maintain efficient control. Such wider control was seen to lower the costs of production, to improve efficiency and to encourage thoughts of rationalising production. A realistic appraisal of the work of foremen and their assistants and a clear definition of their duties in relation to chargehands and instructors would be well worthwhile in some workshops.

The Workers

15. At every workshop informal talks were held with the representatives of the workers and, wherever possible, with the workers themselves. As far as could be seen it is quite wrong to generalise about blind people, who were found to be very much the same cross section of humanity that might be found anywhere. Some of them are a little introspective and over suspicious of anything new and this is aggravated when communications between management and workers are not all they should be. The need for blind workers to be fully informed and, whenever possible, consulted about proposed developments in a workshop is of particular importance. By and large they were found to be very reasonable in their assessment of the problems within workshops—problems of which they are well aware and about which they are very concerned.

16. They are looking for more positive management and would, it is believed, welcome firmer control, so long as it could be seen to be to the advantage of their workshop and to the benefit of the blind in general. With proper communications they would see that there is nothing inherently wrong with time and motion study which, if introduced with a proper attitude of mind, could make their jobs easier and probably give them an opportunity for increased earnings.

17. Blind workers in some of the traditional trades, where considerable effort is required for little return, seem to be less susceptible to incentive bonuses than are other workers. This may be due in part to the high standard of welfare facilities available to them in some areas. There are instances where the worker apparently budgets for a certain income and seems to have no wish to exceed it. To achieve this income means filling a certain number of brush knots or making a certain square footage of matting each week. This he does but no more. On the other hand, it is very clear that a great number of low earners genuinely cannot earn more. In fact instances were seen where blind brush makers were having to

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

work in their lunch periods in order to reach the bare qualifying rate. Low earners of this sort are generally the hardest and most conscientious workers in the department. At the other end of the range, however, there were a number of workers turning out good quality articles quite as quickly as would sighted workers working by similar methods of production.

18. In most workshops there is an increasing proportion of workers who because of age or additional handicaps are very difficult to keep in economic employment. Some would, in fact, be more properly engaged in diversionary occupations than in productive employment in an industrial setting.

The Shop Floor

19. Although most workshops are making similar products there is little similarity in the cost of the materials used, in the method and rate of production, in the earnings of the workers or, in fact, in any other aspect of their work. The variations in cost under every possible heading within every section of every department are very considerable, but do not follow a pattern of any sort. There are low-cost departments in high-cost workshops and there are good and bad items within a department. There is nothing to suggest that a local authority workshop has advantages over a voluntary one or vice versa.

20. Most departments making pitch-set brushes and brooms owe their continued existence to local authority orders for refilling road sweeping roller brushes and supplying scavenger brooms and, to a lesser extent, to Government contracts. Many blind workers are capable only of heavy bass work; only a few of the workers, usually those with a fair degree of sight, are capable of filling with the softer hair and bristle mixtures. The work is not pleasant and it is difficult for workers to earn much more than the qualifying rate. Many of the workers in the brush departments did not want to become brush workers when they entered the workshops many years ago, still do not like the work and would welcome a change from this repetitive and unsatisfying job. No matter how good the worker may be the whole process is a slow cumbersome business and the finished article, although no doubt of excellent wearing properties, is not comparable in the housewife's eye with the newer brushes attractively set in rubber or plastic. When its unattractive appearance is coupled with the high price which is unavoidable if it is to be realistically computed, it is clear that there is little sale for this type of brush in the normal household.

21. The total cost of providing employment in the pitch-set brush departments of the workshops visited varies from £305 to £644 per worker per year, the average cost for all the brush departments visited being £457. (These figures and all subsequent figures used in this context are necessarily approximations due to difficulties in apportioning general overheads between departments and in relating accounts prepared at different points in time. They are, however, reasonable indicators of total costs of employment inclusive of augmentation and all other expenditures.) The main factor which determines the profitability of the department is the local authority attitude towards the placing of brush contracts. Some local authorities will buy from the workshop at a favourable price, whereas others will take a contract from a workshop and give it to an ordinary manufacturer for the sake of a fraction of a penny per brush.

22. It seems almost impossible for a basket department to be self-supporting but, as with other trades, the workshops achieving the best results are those specialising in a particular type of work. In many workshops the production is so mixed that a worker might well make a dog basket, a big G.P.O. hamper and a knitting basket in succession. This is unfortunate, but unavoidable so long as each workshop takes small orders and parts of contracts from whatever source they can be obtained.

23. The total cost of providing employment in basket departments averages £592 per worker per year and varies from a minimum of £458 to a maximum cost of £785. There is no simple explanation of these wide variations, but the advantages of specialisation in production are well illustrated by the fact that basket makers in one workshop, where a large measure of specialisation has been introduced, are earning an average of nearly £400 per year (excluding augmentation) whereas in another workshop on mixed production they are earning less than £130 per year. The income per worker from the sale of the products of basket departments is substantially less than most other departments due, in part, to the low material content in the selling price.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

24. The cost of producing coir mats on vertical and horizontal roller and bobbin warp looms is such that the selling price has to be so much more than the cost of imported Indian mats of the same type that there is virtually no demand for the standard domestic sizes. Workshops which have persisted with the manufacture of these standard sized mats now find themselves with considerable stocks in hand. Similarly, some workshops which have specialised over the years in making gymnasium mats are now having difficulties due to the growing use of rubber mats for this purpose. On the other hand, there is a market for special sized mats for shops, hotels, ships' wheel-houses, cinemas, etc., especially when they can be produced with letters and designs woven into their fabric. It is only in these special lines, where there is virtually no competition, that a good price can be obtained for what is undoubtedly a good product. Unfortunately this is a very limited market and hand-produced mats last for a very long time. The cost of employment in the mat departments averages £489 per worker per year and varies from £281 to £712. Marketing is the deciding factor.

25. In the bedding departments the labour content in the selling price is relatively small, the work is practically unskilled and many blind workers can perform certain operations as rapidly as sighted workers. Because of these factors it is one of the most promising of the trades being carried on at present.

26. The cost of employment in the bedding departments averages £471 per worker per year and varies from £303 to £637 depending very largely upon the type of market available and the degree of specialisation which is possible. Although the total cost of bedding departments is still high, the earnings of the workers are higher than in most other trades and the cost of augmentation payments is correspondingly lower.

27. The round knitting sections are small and the demand for heavy woollen socks is limited almost entirely to outdoor workers and schoolboys. Even in these markets the prices obtainable are usually much below true costs even when augmentation is discounted. Moreover, output is so low that a good worker doing a conscientious week's work can barely earn more than 25s. per week.

28. Hand flat knitting too is a slow process. Output in the workshops seen varied from about 10 to 20 garments each week and earnings ranged from under £2 to over £4 per week. The necessary sighted workers required to cut, style and finish the garments add to the costs, so that realistically computed selling prices would have to be very much higher than competitors' prices for similar articles. A few workshops are having modest success (if augmentation and overhead costs are excluded) with bespoke work and special lines for a relatively small clientele, who are prepared to pay a high price for a high quality article specially made and fitted for them. Unfortunately few workshops have the workers or the supervisors capable of fully exploiting the high priced markets.

29. The cost of employment in knitting departments (round and flat together) averages £519 per worker per year and varies from £413 to £653. The average "real" earnings of the workers in these departments is only a little over £2 per week.

30. Several workshops have introduced non-traditional types of employment in which efficiency can be acquired by practice as distinct from lengthy training. These experiments are showing interesting results but the cost of providing employment in most of them remains high. However, one department visited shows an overall profit; that is a department specially set up for the production of soap tablets. In other departments where mechanisation has been introduced, it is clear that this type of production offers considerable advantages to workers and workshops over handcraft production, if the marketing policy is such as to ensure that the expensive machines are fully loaded with long-run production lines. High speed production requires a completely different technique from that of the traditional trades. Job study and job control become essential. Rate fixing for the mechanised occupations requires a scientific approach if it is to relate mass production output realistically to a wage and bonus structure which was formulated with the traditional handcrafts in mind.

31. One of the biggest general problems on the shop floor is the ancillary worker. In every department a certain amount of fetching and carrying is inevitable unless every worker is to wander around fetching his own materials and disposing of his own finished articles. It is usually preferable for the workers doing this unskilled and semi-skilled work to have a fair degree of sight and so, very often, it is one of the best and highest paid workers who is taken off production for this purpose. His earnings on piecework are averaged into a time-rate and so it is quite usual to find workers doing the labouring jobs credited with higher "earnings" than any of the production workers.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Rates of Absence

32. As might be expected, absence rates are lowest in the more efficient workshops and in the workshops where take-home pay is highest. The highest rates of absence are where there are no bonus schemes or where drive and initiative are lacking. Where mechanised production has been introduced it is noticeable that absences amongst workers on those processes are considerably less than in traditional occupations (7·2 days per worker/year in a mechanised brush department against 25·9 days per worker/year in the pitch set brush department of the same workshop).

Marketing

33. No matter from what point of view workshops are examined their problems eventually come back to marketing. Some managers seem to think that the public has a responsibility to buy anything a workshop may produce no matter how poor its quality or how high its price. Some, in fact, are relying almost entirely on this form of selling on sympathy. Others have introduced the door-to-door sale of vouchers, which the housewife buys weekly and saves until she wants to exchange them for goods (often not blind made) at the workshop's retail shop. These vouchers are usually sold by blind people and the sales talk is essentially based on helping the blind, rather than on the value and quality of the articles. In one area this voucher selling has been taken over by a separate voluntary agency. Vouchers are sold throughout a wide area and, in order to facilitate their exchange for goods, exhibitions and sales are arranged in the smaller communities. A very considerable volume of workshop products is sold by this method and sales are restricted to blind-made goods. It is, nevertheless, again difficult to say other than that many things are bought mainly to use up coupons bought on sympathy.

34. Workshops generally are disposing of their products by both wholesale and retail sales. This is not very satisfactory as the different types of sales require quite different selling techniques. Moreover, the sale of articles direct to the public, especially when an element of sympathy enters into it, may deter local retailers from placing wholesale orders for the same product. In the few instances where it has been decided to produce for a particular market and to direct all sales resources towards exploiting that market, it can be seen to be greatly to the advantage of all concerned. The cost of providing employment is considerably reduced and the workers enjoy increased earnings.

35. On the other hand, the sales activities of some workshops are restricted to limited geographical areas in which there are just not enough markets to absorb the production. This applies particularly to articles, such as bedding, which can be produced quickly and in large quantity. In some cases the department cannot be satisfactorily organised from a production point of view without large-scale orders and these can never be obtained whilst the present marketing restrictions apply.

36. The cost of selling varies from 1 to 25 per cent. of total sales. One workshop, for the expenditure of a little over £1,300, gets sales of over £100,000; another workshop, for practically the same costs, gets considerably less than half the value of sales; and yet another workshop at even greater cost sells only £8,000 worth of goods. A very important factor which helps to determine the cost of sales is the workshop's attitude to the sale of non-blind made goods. Most local authority workshops keep fairly literally to "helping such workers in disposing of the produce of their work", as provided in Section 29(4) (c) of the National Assistance Act, 1948 (a power now exercised under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1958). But one small local authority workshop has an income from factored goods of £11,000–£4,000 more than the income from the products of its own workshop. Among the voluntary societies one workshop imports mats and matting on a large scale. It has an annual income of £37,000 from the sale of factored goods.

Design

37. The majority of workshops' products, especially in the basket, brush and mat departments, are made to specifications laid down by the purchaser and so offer little scope for design. The knitwear departments, too, are filling routine orders for such items as socks, school pullovers, firemen's sweaters and usually rather plain jumpers, cardigans and skirts against customers' direct orders. At one of the workshops visited a real attempt is being made to break into the high priced knitwear market. Fortunately the supervisor there has a good eye for design and by getting ideas from shops and stores is able to introduce very

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

attractive articles. Such design as goes into bedding is limited very largely to the pattern of the ticking and to the technical arrangement of springs and padding. A little experimental work on new types of springing in chairs and divans is being carried out, but this will not be obvious from the external appearance of the articles. One foreman is getting very good ideas from catalogues and from displays in shops and stores and has many lines in the development stage; he just happens to have a flair for this side of the work.

Wages

Earnings and Augmentation

38. The basic minimum payment to which a blind worker is eligible each week differs throughout the range of workshops visited. Not only are there zoning differences between the rates paid to corresponding local authority grades in London, Scotland and the provinces, but blind workers are tied to different grades in different local authority areas. The following table gives the minimum total weekly payment, including augmentation, which a blind man or woman may receive assuming that no bonus scheme is in operation.

Men			Women			Remarks
£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
9	9	0	7	1	9	Received by the workers in eight of the workshops visited.
9	14	3	7	5	8	Received by the workers in two workshops.
9	19	6	7	9	8	Received by the workers in one workshop.
10	0	0	7	10	0	Received by the workers in one workshop.
9	12	9	7	4	2	The workers in one workshop had different rates dependent upon whether they lived in the County Borough area or in the County Council area.
9	9	0	7	1	3	

39. This table forms only the basis for possible total payments. In some cases less than forty-two hours a week are worked and the basic minimum is proportionately lower. On the other hand, in some workshops the workers are paid the above rates although less than forty-two hours a week are worked. The minimum basic payment in all cases consists of the worker's real earnings plus an augmentation payment to bring the amount up to the total shown above. The calculation is complicated by additions of bonus under many differing schemes, but the net effect of bonus additions is to increase the augmentation element and consequently the total take-home pay.

40. The actual earnings of a worker are based on his output each week. In most trades there is a national standard rate fixed for the job. In the more efficient workshops the output of a worker is accurately assessed and the time sheets, prepared by the foremen to show the earnings of the workers, are realistic. In other workshops, including, surprisingly enough, some of the larger ones, assessment of real earnings is more hit and miss. Several cases were seen where the worker is asked at the end of the week what he has made and his earnings are based on his own statement.

41. When workers perform jobs with low yield or when required to make only parts of complete products, they are transferred to time rates calculated from the worker's average piecework earnings in recent weeks. When, as happens quite frequently, a worker is on a time-rated job for a lengthy period, his original piecework earnings are recalculated whenever a change in current piece-rates occurs and his time-rate is adjusted to correspond. In some cases the transfer to time-rates took place as long as fifteen years previously and, as the worker was then more energetic and was probably employed on a straightforward, long flow job, his current time-rates are greatly in excess of his true earnings. Such time-rates are always locally negotiated and differ from workshop to workshop.

42. Because of the basic wages structure, aggravated by the considerations outlined above the total payment received by the worker bears little relation to the work he actually performs. The extent of the variations in the workers' take-home pay can be seen from the fact that, at the time of the survey, the highest male earner in the pitch-set brush departments received £14 14s. 1d., (against actual earnings of £10 15s. 1d.) and the lowest received £9 9s. 0d. (against earnings of £1 13s. 8d.). In basket departments the highest male earner

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

received £19 9s. 6d. (earnings £14 8s. 4d.), the lowest £9 9s. 0d. (earnings £1 10s. 11d.). In mat departments the highest earner received £13 9s. 6d. (earnings £7 19s. 0d.) the lowest £9 9s. 0d. (earnings £1 7s. 6d.) and in bedding departments the highest received £15 3s. 1d. (earnings £14 8s. 1d.) and the lowest £9 9s. 0d. (earnings £1 13s. 0d.). This wide discrepancy can also be seen in departmental averages and is not entirely due to a higher incidence of good workers in some workshops, but reflects the differing values placed on output by different local wage systems.

Bonus Incentive Schemes

43. There are almost as many bonus schemes as there are workshops in the sample visited. In only two workshops was there no bonus scheme in operation.

44. Almost all of the schemes seen are based on individual incentives and the worker receives a proportionate addition to his total pay for all he personally earns above a specified amount. The few exceptions to this arrangement include bonus schemes based on comparative earnings now and three years ago and group bonus schemes related to the average earnings of the department.

45. Only two of the workshops visited regularly apply a fall back provision whereby a worker suffers a reduction in total payment when his earnings fail to reach the specified amount. Other workshops have provisions for such a scheme but seldom use them.

46. The bonus schemes in operation vary from 25 to 100 per cent. of earnings above a specified amount, which in turn varies from workshop to workshop. It is the relationship between these items which determines the value of the scheme, as can be seen from the following actual examples. A worker earning £5 per week in one workshop would receive a bonus of 2s. 11d. (100 per cent. bonus on earnings above £4 17s. 1d.). A worker doing exactly the same amount of work at another workshop would receive a bonus of £1 15s. 5d. (50 per cent. bonus on earnings from £2 5s. 9d. to £3 6s. 9d. and 75 per cent. on earnings over £3 6s. 9d.).

47. A properly balanced incentive bonus scheme can increase production but, unless it is efficiently and imaginatively employed, it can also increase total costs per head. By and large, the bonus schemes have grown up individually in the separate workshops with little thought in some cases to their effects on production and overall costs. Bonus payments are charged to augmentation and as such are not shown against the trading account; this may have resulted in a too generous application.

Other Factors Affecting Pay

48. All the workshops visited paid for two weeks and three days holiday each year. In all cases payment is based on the average earnings and augmentation over the previous quarter, but the majority of workshops treat the holiday payment as augmentation.

49. In general, the workshops apply the generous provision of paying for thirteen weeks' sick absence each year, usually augmenting the National Insurance Sickness Benefit up to the basic minimum wage.

The Effects of Income Tax

50. Income tax is payable only on actual earnings. Payments to augment earnings to the minimum wage and incentive bonuses are free of tax. The result is that few workers are paying income tax and those that are pay only very small amounts. The policy of treating holiday payments as tax-free augmentation and the high rate of absence through sickness mean that most tax-paying workers have a refund at some time of the year.

51. It is, however, very difficult to say why so little tax is being paid. All that can be seen in the workshops is that the workers' earnings generally stop short of the tax paying level. Why they stop short is something which only the workers know. It is probably due in many cases to the worker just not being able to earn more, but in other cases it may well be that he decides not to do so because it will not pay him or will pay him very little. Where there is no bonus scheme he has every incentive to keep his earnings below the level at which he incurs income tax, but even where there is a bonus scheme this deterrent to increased effort may not be fully removed. For example, where the bonus rate is 50 per cent. (a common figure) a worker expects to find an extra 10s. in his pay packet for every £1 he earns above the specified amount. This does in fact apply only up to the point at which his earnings reach

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

the level at which he has to pay tax. From that point onwards, tax is deducted at what the worker considers to be an unreasonable level due to the fact that the extra tax deduction is based, not upon his 10s. increase in gross pay, but upon the extra £1 he has earned. The actual effect of this is as follows:

(A typical scheme would have a basic minimum wage of £9 9s. 0d. per week with a 50 per cent. bonus scheme operating on earnings in excess of £3 per week)

If the worker earns £5 per week his take-home pay would be:

	£	s.	d.	
Earnings	5	0	0	Taxable
Basic Augmentation to increase earnings to basic minimum wage of £9 9s. 0d.	4	9	0	Free of tax
Bonus Augmentation (50 per cent. of amount by which earnings of £5 exceed the bonus starting point of £3)	1	0	0	Free of tax
Gross pay	10	9	0	
Less tax on £5 (P.A.Y.E. Code 35 averaged over a year) ..		1	5	
Take-home pay	10	7	7	

If his earnings increase to £6 the calculation becomes:

	£	s.	d.	
Earnings	6	0	0	Taxable
Basic Augmentation to increase earnings to basic minimum wage of £9 9s. 0d.	3	9	0	Free of tax
Bonus Augmentation (50 per cent. of amount by which earnings of £6 exceed the bonus starting point of £3)	1	10	0	Free of tax
Gross pay	10	19	0	
Less tax on £6		3	10	
Take-home pay	10	15	2	

Thus, for the expenditure of sufficient effort to earn £1, the worker receives only 7s. 7d. more in his actual pay packet. As earnings get nearer to the minimum wage, so does this amount become less, until only about 25 per cent. of extra earnings are received by the worker. With a higher percentage bonus there is more incentive to increase production but the cost of the scheme is also increased.

General Overheads

52. The workshops' profit and loss accounts often do not include any items for depreciation of plant or premises and so should be regarded as giving the cost of administration rather than the cost of general overheads. From this point of view the expenditures fall into two categories: "Central" and "Local" as follows:

Central

53. The voluntary societies start with an immediate advantage over the local authority workshops when profit and loss accounts are examined. In no case do they have to bear any of the costs of the local authority welfare services department for which they act as agents, and in all cases but one of the workshops visited they receive a contribution from the authority to cover part or all of their losses.

54. The charges levied in the accounts of the municipal undertakings in respect of central administrative costs vary from nil to nearly £3,000 per year (for 33 workers) and the level

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

of charge bears no relation to the number of workers employed or to the size or complexity of the workshop. The functions covered by local authority staff throughout the sample visited are broadly the same and consist of:

1. payment for goods received by the workshops;
2. invoicing and collection of amounts due to the workshops;
3. accounting for the above transactions, the division of accounts between different services and the rendering of accounts to other local authorities and workshop customers;
4. payment of wages and salaries from time sheets supplied by the workshops;
5. preparation of annual accounts and the functions of internal audit;
6. keeping records sufficient to cover the above needs.

55. Most if not all of these functions could well be undertaken in the workshop office, which in any case has to keep records for its own use which often duplicate those maintained by the Town Hall. The charges levied by the local authorities are calculated on an assessment, usually prepared in the Borough Treasurer's Department, of the amount of time spent by municipal officials on blind workshop work. In the majority of cases a proportion of central Town Hall expenses, e.g., the salaries of the Borough Treasurer, Borough Architect, Town Clerk, is also added. In addition, the local authority often insists on imposing certain procedures in the workshop office as a safeguard against pilferage, etc. These are often inspired by suggestions from the District Auditor. Such procedures are generally ignored in the voluntary workshops, the management taking the calculated risk that as the stores are of little value in relation to their bulk, the cost of any pilferage which may exist is negligible compared with the cost of imposing watertight preventative measures.

56. It is difficult to reconcile the practice of the authorities which run workshops with those which use voluntary societies as agents. It is difficult to see why, for example, one local authority workshop's profit and loss account should be charged with nearly £3,000 for the central administration of 33 blind workers, while a voluntary society is receiving £10,000 from local authority funds towards their deficit. One local authority charges its workshops' accounts with nothing at all and another charges only for the few individuals in the welfare department intimately connected with the workshop. Some voluntary societies on the other hand receive a hidden subsidy in that the manager's salary is found from local authority funds and no charge is levied in the workshop accounts.

Local

57. There is wide disparity in methods and effectiveness of office work between the different workshops. The only possible generalisation is that workshops do not examine their office procedures as rigorously as perhaps they should. There are instances where great thought has been given to workshop processes to eliminate overheads in production, yet the office systems are out of date. As mentioned earlier, however, some local authority workshops have been compelled to adopt what at first sight appear cumbersome procedures at the instigation of the District Auditor. The size of the office appears to have very little bearing on efficiency. The most efficient one seen had only one clerk. This same workshop also manages a complete stores and stock control system without engaging extra staff.

58. Among the larger workshops employing more than four or five staff, in addition to the manager on workshop functions, there appears to be scope for an organisation and methods survey which could lead to redesigned procedures involving less clerical work. Expensive sighted staff could probably be saved.

Accounting

59. The Ministry of Labour some years ago issued to all local authorities and workshops a specimen layout, to which their accounts should conform. At the present time, although workshop accounts follow the main headings of this pro forma, the make-up of the amounts under each heading differs so materially from one workshop to another that comparisons on the basis of the published accounts cannot be reliably made. The following are examples of materially different approaches:

1. One City Council includes the expenses of local authority staff under the heading of "management". One would expect a separate entry on the account as is the case elsewhere.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

2. A Borough Council shows as productive earnings in its trading accounts only those amounts corresponding to the relevant qualifying rate, although the workers earn above those levels. The difference between qualifying rates and actual earnings is classed as augmentation. This procedure produces an artificially enbanced trading profit.
3. Foremen in many departments are responsible for some production work. There is no common practice throughout the workshops in allocating their wages between productive earnings in the trading account and non-productive earnings in the profit and loss account. The proportion so allocated can affect departmental gross trading profits as shown in the trading accounts.
4. At two voluntary workshops the salary of the manager is paid directly by the local authority and no entry appears in the accounts to show the substantial contribution to running costs.
5. In one or two cases amounts in respect of management and selling expenses have been combined.

For all workshops to follow the same pattern in these respects would occasion no more work than now exists and would give a truer picture of each workshop and would enable a better comparison one with another to be made.

Costing of Products

60. The general impression of the costing methods of the workshops visited is that a far more realistic approach is necessary. Few workshops have details readily available of the costs of making their regular lines and only one workshop is attempting to apportion overhead costs realistically between departments and to cover these in the costing of the products. The general practice is to cost only materials and earnings with perhaps a token addition for wastage and regard anything above this total as "profit". This "profit" is regarded as satisfactory if it is 10 to 20 per cent. of the so-called prime costs, when in fact an addition of perhaps 200 per cent. or more on labour costs would be required to cover overheads even when augmentation and depreciation have been excluded. It is, of course, obvious that workshops cannot always get the price determined by true costings covering earnings (calculated at fit labour costs), materials and departmental and workshop overheads, but without costings on these lines managers can only guess which might be the least uneconomic orders to undertake. The tendency is for them to take work at an offered price, costing it by guesswork and calculating the actual costs later if at all.

Conclusions

61. Among the more important conclusions drawn by the survey officers were:
    1. There was no relation between the size of a workshop and its level of efficiency and cost per head.
    2. No conclusion could safely be drawn merely from a comparison of accounts in the form in which they are at present prepared.
    3. The quality of management is all important.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 12

EVIDENCE SUBMITTED BY REMPLOY LIMITED

1. Remploy Limited presented very full and most useful evidence, both written and oral, based upon their experience in providing employment for more than 6,000 severely disabled persons in 90 factories. The following is a summary. It relates to the position in mid-1961.

ORGANISATION

2. The main object of Remploy Limited is to provide employment for persons so severely disabled that work under normal conditions would be beyond their capabilities. To do this, Remploy has 90 factories throughout Great Britain, the smallest employing 25 workers and the largest employing 198. Each factory specialises, as far as possible, on one particular type of production and factories engaged on similar work are grouped by trades for efficiency of administration and production. The seven trade groups are as follows:

Domestic Furniture which also includes the production of mattresses, divans and springs for interior spring mattresses. This group consists of 19 factories employing about 1,500 disabled employees.

General Services which manufactures wooden articles under contract, both commercial and Government. This group is also responsible for the provision of work for the disabled homeworkers. It consists of 12 factories employing nearly 900 disabled employees.

Engineering. This group manufactures, in the main, light engineering articles, electrical elements and domestic electric appliances. There are also a number of sponsorship schemes in this group. It consists of 12 factories employing over 900 disabled employees.

Protective Clothing and Textile Sewing. This group not only manufactures for the Government under contract but also produces leather work, foul weather clothing and protective clothing for the commercial market. It also operates sponsorship schemes. The group consists of 12 factories employing about 770 disabled employees.

Orthopaedics. This group produces orthopaedic footwear, belts, trusses, etc. It consists of seven factories employing about 430 disabled employees.

Packaging and Bookbinding. This group is engaged in packaging, identification and preservation, in which connection it also manufactures specialised wooden cases for packaging. In addition it manufactures cardboard boxes and has a small section engaged in bookbinding and printing. The printing factory prints most of the Company's stationery. It consists of 20 factories employing about 1,250 disabled employees.

Knitwear. This group manufactures knitted outer garments and also stump socks. It consists of eight factories employing about 370 disabled employees.

3. The overall management of the Company is under the administration of a Board of Directors which consists of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, four full-time salaried Directors, one part-time salaried Director and seven non-salaried part-time Directors. The salaried Directors are known as Working Directors and they control the day-to-day management of the Company. They consist of a Production Director, Sales Director, Personnel Director and Financial Director and are headed by a Managing Director. Their responsibilities are as follows:

The Production Director is responsible for the control of the productive functions of the Company. Each of the trade groups mentioned above is headed by a Group Controller who is responsible for the provision and maintenance of facilities for productive employment within his group. Each factory is administered by a Works Manager. The Production Director is also responsible for incentive bonus schemes and work study, through a Senior Works Study Engineer, and he also has under his control a Chief Purchasing Officer responsible for the overall control of purchasing techniques and the purchasing of capital items of plant, machinery, etc.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

The Sales Director is responsible for the control of all selling and marketing functions and for advertising through a Home Sales Manager, a Contracts and Export Sales Manager, a Warehouse and Transport Controller and an Advertising Manager.

The Personnel Director is responsible for all personnel matters, public relations and medical services.

The Financial Director is responsible for central accounting, internal audit, estimating, budgetary control and all statistics.

4. Remploy is essentially an ordinary business concern following normal commercial practices. It is the Company's general policy, therefore, to recruit its executive staff from ordinary industry on the basis of qualification, experience and proven ability in the type of work for which they are required. A detailed knowledge of disabilities and the limitations of the workers is considered to be of less importance above factory manager level, although the Head Office and executive staff are very conscious of the social welfare functions of the Company.

5. In April, 1961, Remploy employed 6,017 severely disabled persons on productive work, 174 severely disabled persons on the staff, 126 registered disabled, but not severely disabled, persons on the staff and about 2,483 fit tradesmen, labourers, drivers, technical, administrative, clerical and sales staff.

6. In the year ended 31st March, 1960, the earned income of the Company was £5,223,561. Grant from the Ministry of Labour towards running costs amounted to £2,679,984, and a further contribution of £291,397 was made towards capital expenditure. Wages paid to severely disabled persons amounted to £2,268,902 and the cost of materials consumed was £2,751,379. The excess of expenditure over income was £2,720,713, thus the average cost per head of providing employment for the severely disabled in that year was £435.

7. The Ministry of Labour estimate that if Remploy were to pay wages at not less than the minimum rates applicable in workshops for the blind their losses would be increased by about £50 per worker per year. Thus the cost per worker appears comparable to that of the workshops for the blind. However Remploy, unlike the workshops, meets all its own training costs and the losses per head have been tending recently to decrease, whereas those of the workshops have been increasing. Although expenditure on wages and overheads has increased very considerably in the past ten years, the Company has been able to absorb those increases by improved efficiency and increased sales, and so keep the excess of expenditure over income reasonably steady over the whole period.

THE DISABLED EMPLOYEES

8. Remploy's employees suffer from a very wide range of disabilities and working capacities vary considerably. It is the Company's policy to mix disabled persons suffering from different disabilities, except where this is not possible for medical reasons (for example in the case of persons suffering from infectious tuberculosis). The advantages of this arrangement are considered to be that it prevents any group of disabled people from feeling that there is something special or obnoxious about their disability and it gives the Works Manager freedom to dispose his labour force according to the work needs and the abilities of the individuals. No particular disadvantages have been found from mixing disabilities; where friction has occurred it has been more often due to temperament than to disability.

9. Absences on account of sickness average 15 per cent. per annum and are generally found to be higher amongst those suffering from organic diseases than amongst those suffering solely from physical disabilities or deformities. But sick absences are also seen to be affected by a number of other factors including morale and work satisfaction.

NATURE OF WORK, PRODUCTION METHODS, ETC.

10. The work undertaken was not chosen to suit the range and degree of disability of the workers. The aim was rather to adapt the abilities of the disabled workers to the manufacturing operations to be performed. Normal industrial production methods are used with any necessary modifications such as adaptations to machines, the provision of special jigs and fixtures or by arranging special seating or standing facilities.

11. The age level of Remploy's workers (40 per cent. of the productive personnel are fifty years of age or more) and the general level of education and aptitude is such that perhaps

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

only 10 per cent. are capable of performing a craft job. The bulk of the workers had to be placed, and in fact preferred to be placed, on work that was unskilled and semi-skilled. The best productivity has been found to come from work which contains simple assembly operations because the distribution of such work can be balanced over a group of disabled workers in such a way that the best output can be obtained from each individual. When work can be transferred to machines, so leaving the operator free of responsibility except for feeding and removing material, this is again preferred to work which taxes the human element and skill in its manufacture.

12. New entrants to Remploy are taken on for a three months' probationary period, in which time it is decided what work is best suited to their aptitudes and abilities. On-the-job training is provided as necessary and although there are variations due to the type of work to be undertaken, a worker is usually Remploy-efficient in a skilled job in about 18 months, whereas 12 months might be sufficient for an easier occupation. All training is arranged on the job and wages are paid from the onset. All costs of training are borne by the Company.

13. In factories employing people suffering from all kinds of disabilities, it is inevitable that a number of fit workers should be employed on productive processes. In Remploy it has been agreed that, if necessary, able-bodied workers can be employed up to 15 per cent. of the productive labour force. It is not expected that this figure will ever be reached and the overall percentage is now only 10·6 per cent. (excluding foremen but including supervisory staff up to the level of chargehand). Fit workers are necessary for handling heavy materials and equipment and also for providing the skilled operatives necessary to achieve the maximum efficiency from certain types of machines such as are found in engineering, woodworking and in knitwear factories. Remploy has found that many disabled persons, even after training, are prevented by their disabilities from getting maximum output from such machines and that it is advisable to employ fit workers in order to ensure that the machine is used to its maximum extent and that there is no holdup in the supply of parts to the rest of the factory. Fit workers are also necessary to overcome bottlenecks in production and to give a stimulus to production generally. Remploy's experience has shown them that the infusion of a small number of fit operators can substantially improve the economy of the unit out of all proportion to their numbers. Because of these considerations the number of fit workers varies very considerably between Remploy's 90 factories. As might be expected the percentage of fit workers is lowest in the bookbinding factories (2 per cent.) and in the protective clothing and textile sewing group (6 per cent.). It is highest in engineering (15 per cent.), packaging (13 per cent.) and general services (12 per cent.).

THE REMPLOY WAGES SYSTEM

14. In Remploy all workers are paid on basic time rates irrespective of the type of work on which they are engaged. These basic rates are set out in a formal agreement on wages, hours and working conditions which was drawn up between Remploy on the one hand and the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the National Union of Leather Workers, the National Union of Printing, Bookbinding and Paper Workers, the National Union of Hosiery Workers, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers and the Typographical Association, on the other hand. This agreement, known as the Remploy Wages Agreement, lays down a minimum starting rate for adult males (3s. 6½d. per hour in mid-1961) "to be increased at the discretion of the Factory Manager but with the right of the local trade union official to make representations, to a maximum rate" (3s. 9d. per hour in mid-1961) "within a period of two years". The latter rate (3s. 9d.) thus becomes the minimum rate payable after two years' service with the Company. Women are paid under the same Agreement at 80 per cent. of the adult male rates and employees under twenty-one years of age, both male and female are paid according to an age scale.

15. These basic rates fall short of the normal minimum trade rates for the job by amounts varying from ½d. per hour to 2s. 3½d. per hour. This gap is used to provide a margin of "merit" increases to which all workers are entitled if it can be shown that the standard of their work justifies a higher rate than the one they are receiving. The relevant clause in the Remploy Wages Agreement is as follows:

> "It shall be competent for the full-time trade union official to approach the local management at any time where it can be shown that an employee is qualified to receive a rate of pay in excess of 3s. 9d. per hour. In such cases the rate payable will be based on the

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

appropriate industrial or trade rate for the job and the ability of the individual to earn that rate. Any fully qualified employee shall be paid the full district trade rate applicable to his or her occupation."

16. The Remploy Wages Agreement does not in itself absolve the Company from its legal obligations to observe the rates and conditions laid down by the various Wages Councils which have been set up under the Wages Councils Act, 1945. Several Wages Councils have granted exemption from the provisions of their Orders, but where exemption has been refused the Company has to apply for individual permits to pay its employees below the minimum Wages Council rates.

17. Whatever the relationship between the Remploy rate and the trade rate, Remploy considers it essential for Works Managers to have the opportunity to reward more capable or more industrious workers. One worker might well do four times as much work as another and he will not work happily unless this is recognised in part in his wages. In order to provide these rewards for merit and proficiency the following methods have been adopted.

Domestic Furniture and General Woodworking Trades

18. Workers in the first two years of their service are paid within the terms of the Remploy Wages Agreement against bulk permits issued by the British Furniture Trade Joint Industrial Council.

19. After two years' service individual permits to pay rates below the normal trade rates are required and these are issued by the J.I.C. based upon a percentage assessment of the worker's skill and productivity in relation to the standards normally expected of a skilled and able-bodied worker performing similar work. The worker is paid at the Remploy two-year rate if that rate is higher than the assessed percentage of the trade rate.

20. A general review of proficiency assessments is normally carried out every twelve months at meetings arranged at local level with representatives of the British Furniture Trade Joint Industrial Council.

Printing and Bookbinding Trade

21. Special scales have been agreed with the National Union of Printing, Bookbinding and Paper Workers to regulate the wage rates of disabled persons in this trade who have completed two or more years with the Company. The scales divide the difference between the Remploy two-year rate and the appropriate minimum district trade rate into 14 rating points and individual workers are given ratings based upon their skill and productivity in relation to normal craft standards. Ratings are agreed with the trade unions at an annual review which takes place in September each year.

General Wage Structures

22. In trades other than domestic furniture and printing and bookbinding increases above the Remploy rate used to be dealt with on an *ad hoc* basis, but this led to difficulties. A new kind of wage structure is now being introduced in consultation with the trade unions. It provides for two kinds of additions to the basic Remploy rate.

(1) A job rate. This is an addition related to the job. It takes into account the question of special skills, dexterity and aptitudes required in the job, various environmental factors, dirtiness and other unpleasant characteristics.

(2) A merit rate. This is an addition related to the individual. It takes account of personal attributes such as general proficiency, application to work, timekeeping, attendance and general behaviour. It can be reduced or even withdrawn if the worker fails to maintain the standard for which it was awarded. Trade union representatives are always consulted on the fixing of these rates.

23. The first trade in Remploy to which this approach was made was Preservation, Identification and Packaging. In this trade the merit factor is evaluated at 3½d. per hour and is regarded as a personal rate attaching to the individual, irrespective of the work upon which he might be engaged, for so long as he maintains the standard for which it is awarded. Jobs and operations are evaluated according to their contents and those containing special features are awarded job rates ranging from 1d. per hour to 3d. per hour. The job rate is attached to the job and is payable to a worker only for so long as he is actually employed on that specific job.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

24. A similar wage structure was later introduced into the Orthopaedic trade. Certain adaptations were necessary and in particular a separate proficiency element based upon work study timings was introduced. These proficiency rates are assessed and paid weekly according to the standard of productivity reached by each individual.

25. The method of introduction was to guarantee the wage rates being paid prior to the introduction of the new wage structure for a period of six months. In that time the worker received either the new or the old rate, whichever was the higher. At the expiration nf the six months' period the guaranteed minimum was withdrawn.

26. This form of wage structure has also been found to be very satisfactory for meeting particular situations, one of the more interesting being at the Portsmnuth Workshops for the Disabled, where sighted disabled people employed on normal Remploy terms and conditions were employed alongside blind workers enjoying higher rates of pay and better conditions of employment. This led to a good deal of dissension and a special Remploy wage structure on the lines outlined above had to be devised. This kind of wages structure has proved so successful that the Company is considering a wider application.

Other Trades

27. In trades other than those already mentioned the Works Managers have authority to grant merit or proficiency increases up to 2d. per hour above the twn-year Remploy rate. Increases beyond that limit require the approval of the Group Controller. Such increases when once given are not easily withdrawn. Managers are therefore required to reach a clear understanding with their employees and their representatives that the award is on the condition that it will be withdrawn if the worker fails to maintain his improved work standards.

Incentive Bonus Scheme

28. Incentive bonuses payable on top of the other additions mentioned above have so far been introduced into 40 Remploy factories and cover 1,862 disabled workers, whose average bonus payments are in the region of 5·43 pence per hour for a working week of 42 hours. It is hoped ultimately to introduce them into all of the Remploy factories.

29. The scheme adopted by the Company is a modification of the Bedaux system which assumes that all human effort could be measured in terms of a composite unit. This unit, which always totals one minute of time, is made up of a combination of work and rest with the proportions varying with the effort expended and the subsequent relaxation required to compensate for it. The ratio of work to rest within a unit varies according to the task, but the unit itself remains constant. Thus the unit represents what a normal experienced man would be expected to do in one minute, when working at a reasonable speed in good conditions and availing himself of the necessary measure of relaxation. A normal standard of working is a 60 minute hour, but few able-bodied workers exceed a 45 or 50 minute hour without some form of incentive and so it is usual when this system is being used in industry to pay bonus for output in excess of a 45 minute hour. In Remploy, with the lower standards to be expected from severely handicapped workers, it is usual to pay bonus on output in excess of a 20 or 25 minute hour. The average working speed achieved is a 31 minute hour.

30. The system is used by Remploy to give collective or group (not individual) bonuses, but their experience has been that the greatest benefits are obtained if the groups are kept as small as possible.

31. Bonus earnings are calculated on a daily basis and the information is posted each day on the factory notice boards in order to maintain a constant interest.

32. The scale of bonus payments was originally based upon the basic wage provided for under the Remploy Wages Agreement, but the Company is departing from that arrangement. In future the bonus scales would be built up in such a way that the bonus payment at a 45 minute hour, when combined with the basic rates provided under the Wages Agreement, would equal the district rates for the trade in which the workers were engaged.

General

33. The provision of wages additions has resulted in more than half of Remploy's workers receiving more than the agreed Remploy Rate.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

THE REMPLOY ESTIMATING SYSTEM

34. As Remploy, because of the disability of its labour and the uneconomic spread and geographical location of its factories, cannot produce articles for the same cost as ordinary industry, it is considered unnecessary to go to the expense of assessing true costs of production. It is, however, essential to know what is a fair price to charge for a product; Remploy regards it as important not to undercut other producers. The aim of the estimating system is, therefore, to arrive at the production cost of each article as if it had been made by fit labour in ordinary industry with normal industrial overheads. The fit labour and material contents of the article to be manufactured are assessed by skilled estimators and overheads are added for factory administration based upon Board of Trade statistics, Company accounts, etc. The result of these calculations plus an added percentage for profit is Remploy's calculated selling price. This is then tested by comparison with competitors' products and prices; usually it is found to approximate to them fairly closely.

35. This form of estimating is considered to be very valuable to Remploy. In particular it shows the material content of an article in relation to the net selling price. By studying this relationship, improving designs, using less materials and increasing selling prices Remploy has reduced the average material content in its products from 80 to 51·7 per cent. It also allows Remploy to demonstrate that the selling prices of its manufactures are realistically and fairly computed on the same bases as their competitors.

PURCHASING

36. Remploy purchases raw materials in bulk. Each Group Controller is responsible for the purchase of production materials for his group of factories. Most groups employ Purchasing Officers for this purpose. The large orders which result from this arrangement are valuable to suppliers and, by hard bargaining, prices have been reduced by trade, settlement or quantity rebates or by any other means which could be negotiated. The arrangements are also advantageous in that fewer people are authorised to enter contracts on behalf of the Company; stocks in hand are considerably reduced; specialised knowledge is applied so leaving the factory manager free to concentrate on production problems; closer general and budgetary control over materials and stocks is exercised; economies are effected in clerical labour and paper work; cash resources are used to better advantage; and it avoids competition between factories for materials in short supply or on long delivery.

THE REMPLOY MARKETING SYSTEM

Sales Organisation

37. Remploy firmly believes that marketing policy is the key to success in running sheltered workshops; it requires special knowledge and techniques and, if it is to be successful, should be completely separate from factory management. The Remploy sales organisation, with the exception of the sponsorship schemes (see below) is controlled by the Sales Director, to whom the Contracts/Export Manager, the Home Sales Manager, the Warehouse and Transport Controller and the Advertising Manager are directly responsible. Production programmes are based upon the sales organisation's estimates of sales prospects, and targets for both production and sales are fixed at annual discussions attended by the Sales Director, Home Sales Manager and Finance Controller together with individual Group Controllers and Sales Managers. It then becomes the responsibility of the Sales Executive to make plans to sell on the basis of such targets. From the main targets individual sub-targets are set for sales groups and areas and so on down to individual representatives and agents.

38. The immediate responsibility for production and sales administration in each of the Company's trade groups rests with the relevant Group Controller, who arranges within his group for functional Sales Managers or senior representatives to control the various sales activities. They in turn have representatives in the field throughout the country.

39. Remploy's sales policy is based upon supplying their products through normal trade outlets and building up a reputation for a good article at a reasonable price. The Company does not consider sympathy to be a satisfactory basis for a sales policy and they aim to sell their products on merit.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Market Research

40. Remploy considers that the employment of a fully qualified market research organisation in Remploy's many trades would be too expensive for the Company to bear. In order that up-to-date information in respect of design and price trends may be readily available, a disabled member of the Head Office staff is engaged in making calls on wholesalers, retailers, manufacturers, exhibitions, etc. He also examines trade journals and thus within the limitations of one man working on his own, a reasonably useful market intelligence service is provided. A considerable amount of market information is also obtained from area Sales Managers and representatives who, when making their calls, keep a watchful eye for new designs and prices.

41. Prototypes of new lines are submitted to bodies such as the Council of Industrial Design and the Electrical Development Association with a view to getting their approval.

Advertising

42. A modest sum is set aside each year to cover trade and national advertising, literature and circularising, exhibitions and stock-rooms, photographs and show vans. The amount of money available is apportioned between the various trade groups depending upon the type of advertising likely to be required, but the general aim is to hold a large portion in reserve so that in the event of any trade having difficulty in selling its merchandise, an attempt to retrieve the situation through advertising could be financed. Advertising is arranged through a commercial agency which prepares advertising schemes and offers suggestions based upon the agreed requirements of the Sales Managers.

43. A public relations agency has been retained for some years: it has provided valuable assistance in publicising the Company's trade insignia of the word "Remploy" enclosed in an oval.

44. Showrooms have been set up in Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, London, Newcastle and Oldham.

Difficulties Encountered in Establishing the Sales Organisation

45. Amongst the difficulties encountered in the Company's early days were:

Personnel—Executive sales staffs and representatives were reluctant to join Remploy from outside industry because the Company was relatively unknown and there was an impression that the products were not up to normal commercial standards. There was also a lack of specialisation in representation of the different classes of products made.

Quality—Much of the early merchandise was unsatisfactory in design, workmanship and limitation of range. The trade were suspicious that if they ordered from Remploy they would get sub-standard goods. It has taken time to overcome the prejudice against products made by severely disabled persons and even now advertising without reference to the disability of the workers achieves the best results.

Delivery—There was a marked inability in the early days to produce further supplies of goods when the demand was high. This has to a large extent now been obviated by better warehousing which enables stocks to be built up in the quieter selling seasons.

Saleability—Poor designs hampered by the general utility regulations of the time were not in keeping with trends in outside industry. These together with an unstable price policy led to difficulties in selling the merchandise.

Demand—Limitation of finances for advertising delayed the creation of a demand for Remploy goods from the public and industry. It also delayed establishing the confidence of fellow manufacturers and this was important if the Company was to become a member of the various trade associations and thus enjoy the advantages of discussion and information on trade problems.

CONTRACTS

46. Over the years the proportion of commercial sales of standard Remploy products has steadily increased, whilst the amount of contract work has correspondingly declined. In the 1960–61 Financial Year the proportions were about 80 per cent. for commercial sales and 20 per cent. for contracts out of total sales of about £5½ million.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

47. The type of contract work undertaken is, as far as possible, that which conforms to, or is at least akin to, the standard production of the Company's trade groups. It is considered that when contracts of a suitable kind can be obtained they offer advantages of lower overall sales costs, assured sales, guaranteed productive employment and reduced production costs. As a general rule Remploy only accepts contract work where the prospects of long-run production are offered, but on occasions it has been found prudent to take work at very competitive and relatively uneconomical prices in order to keep the Company's name before customers who would provide a source of substantial and suitable work.

48. The most substantial part of Remploy's contracts comes from Government purchasing departments. The Company has some measure of preference as a priority supplier, but the securing of these contracts depends upon the ability to compete with open industry in every respect of price, quality and delivery. A further substantial source of contract orders is from the commercial field. Many non-standard Remploy products are made either as part of the customer's design range or to the customer's special requirements. All of these contract orders contain the essential element of long-run production. Commercial sub-contract work, however, sometimes requires the finished articles to be held and unforeseen warehousing costs have thus been incurred.

49. The requirements of local authorities and, to some extent, the nationalised industries, are considered to be generally too small and too varied in type and design to be economically taken on contract.

SPONSORSHIP SCHEMES

50. Remploy's "sponsorship schemes" have been developed with great advantage over the past few years. A sponsor is a manufacturer who, under the terms of a formal agreement, undertakes for a guaranteed period, often as long as five years, to equip a Remploy factory with the necessary plant and tools, provide the materials and work load and dispose of the products through his own selling organisation. Thus in one operation Remploy achieves a greater degree of mechanisation, the necessary work load and the removal of the selling operation, whilst the sponsor increases his own productive capacity without the attendant risks and capital outlay on buildings and services.

51. A wide range of goods is being manufactured under the twelve Remploy Sponsorship Schemes at present in operation and these include the manufacture of parts and accessories for the motor car industry, switches, radio resistors, mattress covers, valves, seals, hydraulic props and bedspreads. In the schemes which have been in operation for some time the cost of employing severely disabled people has been almost halved and the sponsors are very satisfied with the results.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 13

INFORMATION CONCERNING OTHER WORKSHOPS FOR THE SIGHTED DISABLED IN GREAT BRITAIN

A. GRANT-AIDED WORKSHOPS

1. The Working Party received certain information collated by the Ministry of Labour about workshops, other than those of Remploy Limited, which provide sheltered employment for the sighted disabled and which are grant-aided by the Ministry.

2. There are more than 30 such workshops and most are run by voluntary non-profit making organisations, some of long standing. Financial assistance is given towards running costs either directly from the Ministry in the form of a "deficiency grant" (75 per cent. of trading loss subject to a maximum of £240 per annum per approved worker) or through a local authority for which it acts as agent. Few workshops are, however, operating under the latter arrangement, as it is only in recent years that local authorities have obtained permissive powers to make such arrangements for disabled people other than the blind and the tuberculous. There are also a few workshops for the sighted disabled run directly by local authorities, including four for the tuberculous. The latter formerly received grant-aid from the Ministry of Health, but became the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour following the passage of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1958.

3. There is normally no system of augmentation of wages of sighted disabled workers in these workshops, on the lines of the arrangements in workshops for the blind. All remuneration is regarded as wages and shown as such in the trading accounts. The average annual cost of providing employment in most of these sheltered workshops has in recent years been below £300 per worker (in some cases below £200) which is considerably lower than in Remploy factories (£431 in 1960-61) or in workshops for the blind (where it averaged £474, including augmentation, in 1960-61). In some cases, the wages paid to the workers are not high in comparison with the augmented wage in workshops for the blind but that is by no means always so. Many workshops pay normal trade union rates of weekly wages.

4. Training is normally provided at Ministry of Labour expense in the same way as in workshops for the blind, but a few workshops train entirely on the job paying wages from the start.

5. Detailed information was provided on the following workshops which were considered to be particularly successful in terms of marketing and general efficiency.

Lord Roberts Workshops

6. These are the oldest sheltered workshops in the country, dating from the turn of the century. Since 1904 they have been run by the Forces Help Society. Their main object was, and still is, to provide sheltered employment for disabled ex-Servicemen; today they do not insist that disabilities must be attributable to war service and they can also employ ex-members of the Women's Forces. All kinds of disabilities are accepted—amputations, effects of wounds, chest complaints, certain nervous disorders, spinal complaints, arthritis, etc.

7. There are seven Lord Roberts Factories in Great Britain employing more than 300 workers (about 80 of them able-bodied) in factories which specialise in particular types of production; all are approved as sheltered workshops by the Ministry of Labour. Some of the disabled people employed are not regarded by the Ministry as in need of sheltered conditions and grant is paid only in respect of those who are.

8. Four factories are engaged in the manufacture of different types of furniture; one, for example, makes a great quantity of educational and hospital furniture; another concentrates on ecclesiastical furniture, but also makes domestic, school and office furniture. One small factory is entirely engaged on brush production and another, at Colchester, on baskets.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

9. All workers, whether or not disabled, are paid weekly wages, normally at full trade union rates (J.I.C. or Wages Council). Usually these are on a time basis, e.g. at the London (furniture) factory the rates (for a 42 hour week) are £12 3s. 3d. for skilled men and £10 17s. 0d. for unskilled. Where, exceptionally, piece-rates are paid, there is a guaranteed weekly minimum, e.g. £8 18s. 6d. at the Edinburgh (brush) Workshops.

10. In general each manager is responsible for his own marketing and outlets are usually found in the locality of the particular workshop. For example, the factory predominantly employed in the production of educational and hospital furniture disposes of most of its output to a nearby university and to local hospitals and schools; light furniture from another factory is sold to retailers of the area, to local authorities and on Government contract; ecclesiastical furniture on the other hand requires a wider market and the manager arranges for the distribution of suitable publicity material. Some central co-ordination of marketing is available but applies particularly to Government contracts. Some products, especially smaller items are on show and are sold at showrooms within the Headquarters of the Forces Help Society at 122 Brompton Road, London, S.W.3.

11. The Society has always laid great stress on craftsmanship and quality, and taken pride that the goods sell on merits and very little on sympathy. They are very conscious of the need to keep costs down. Recently the London and Bristol workshops have been completely re-organised so as to improve layout and work-flow and reduce overheads. In recent years the annual trading loss per severely disabled worker has varied around £150–£200. It was £179 in 1959–60.

Sir Robert Jones Memorial Workshops, Liverpool (founded 1902)

12. In 1936 a large modern workshop was built with funds raised by public subscription as a memorial to Sir Robert Jones, the famous orthopaedic surgeon. The premises were requisitioned by the military authorities during the war. The workshop was reopened in 1946 as a sheltered undertaking managed by a voluntary committee and was approved for grant from the Ministry of Labour in July, 1947.

13. Over 70 severely disabled men are employed together with a small staff of able-bodied instructors.

14. Disabilities accepted include paralysis, heart disease, amputations, tuberculosis, bronchitis, mental deficiency, epilepsy, rheumatism, deafness, spinal deformity, diabetes, Parkinson's disease.

15. The work done consists mainly of book-binding (books, periodicals, bibles, ledgers, account books, etc.) and printing (annual reports, invitation cards, invoices and other office stationery, posters, etc.). There is also some paper-bag making.

16. Sales representatives visit firms and obtain orders for all departments. Orders are also received through advertising and personal recommendations. In addition, contract work is received from H.M. Stationery Office.

17. The wages paid to the disabled men are graded according to the type of work and performance, the highest grade being 80 per cent. of the appropriate trade union rate in the printing and bookbinding trade. In November, 1961, they ranged from £7 2s. 0d. to £9 15s. 7d. The working week is 38½ hours: there is some voluntary overtime, paid at time and a quarter.

18. The cost of providing employment has averaged £300 a year per severely disabled worker during the past three years.

Dorincourt, Leatherhead, Surrey

19. This is a residential sheltered workshop for severely disabled people in need of accommodation as well as of employment. It is run by Dorincourt Estates in close conjunction with the Queen Elizabeth's Training College for the Disabled, which it adjoins. It was opened in 1958, and consists of two workshop buildings and a special hostel. The Ministry of Labour made a grant towards the former and the L.C.C. a loan towards the latter, on the

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

understanding that Dorincourt would enter into an agency arrangement with the Council for provision of sheltered employment and reserve a proportion of the places for L.C.C. nominees. There are now 45 severely disabled workers in the workshop, almost all sponsored by local authorities under agency arrangements; 24 different authorities are involved. Each pays an annual sum in respect of every disabled person sponsored and claims capitation grant from the Ministry of Labour on the expenditure.

20. The people in this workshop are very severely disabled even by sheltered workshop standards. The majority are wheelchair cases, though there are some (e.g. severe epileptics) who are ambulant. Some had been in institutions for years before coming to Dorincourt.

21. Wages are fixed at £8 5s. 0d. per week per man, but of this £5 15s. 0d. is held back as payment for the hostel accommodation, which is of a very high standard and includes special facilities and amenities designed to meet the needs of these severely disabled people, some of whom need personal assistance with their toilet, etc.

22. The workshop is in two sections, one engaged on sub-contracted assembly work, and the other (which is much the more profitable) on hand-painted tiles of Dorincourt's own design. The work has been broken down so that each operation is very simple and can be quickly learnt. The tiles are sold commercially to builders, furniture manufacturers, private customers, etc. on merits under the name "Dorincourt Potters" without reference to their being made by the disabled. They have been shown at the Design Centre and are on permanent display at the Building Centre in London (Tottenham Court Road).

23. The trading loss per head in the first year of operation was £376, but in the second year (1959–60) it was only £246.

Sherwood Industries (Nottinghamshire County Council)

24. This is a residential settlement for the tuberculous, established by the Nottinghamshire County Council in 1937. It was formerly grant-aided by the Ministry of Health, but came within Ministry of Labour grant arrangements after the passage of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1958.

25. Tuberculous patients are accepted in the first instance as trainees, and given a fairly long period of rehabilitation-cum-training with gradually increasing working hours. Thereafter they are offered sheltered employment until fit to go to open industry. There are over 40 disabled workers and a few fit employees. The normal working week is 42 hours, but individuals may work shorter hours on health grounds. Wages are paid at hourly rates based on those fixed by the N.J.I.C. for the furniture trade; they range from 80 per cent. of the journeyman's rate to the full skilled craftsmen's rate, according to proficiency (more for chargehands). Where a worker cannot put in the full 42 hours a supplement is paid; otherwise wages are on the ordinary industrial basis with no augmentation element.

26. Eighty per cent. of production now consists of school furniture made for local authorities; this work is organised on a mass production basis. The remaining 20 per cent. consists half of sectional building (garages and greenhouses) and half of furniture for the Ministry of Works.

27. By concentrating production in this way trading losses have been kept down. The figures for the short period since the Ministry of Labour assumed responsibility are as follows:

	Loss per severely disabled employee £
1958–1959	222
1959–1960	242

LuDun Ltd.

28. The idea of this workshop dates back to 1944 and is attributable to those responsible for starting the Rehabilitation Centre at the Luton and Dunstable Hospital. This Centre, controlled by a voluntary committee, rehabilitated disabled persons to a stage where they could return to ordinary employment, but had no outlet for those severely disabled. The idea was reinforced when the doctor in charge of the chest unit at St. Mary's Hospital,

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Luton, began thinking on the same lines during 1947. In 1948 these two bodies joined to discuss the problem of the disabled person who would never be fit to undertake employment in open industry. A non-profit making company was formed and a sheltered workshop set up, at first in the old mortuary at St. Mary's Hospital; later it was moved into a factory offered by one of the Directors. It was approved for Ministry of Labour deficiency grant in 1951. In 1953 Bedfordshire County Council agreed to appoint the workshop as agent for the provision of sheltered employment. This was the first local authority agency arrangement for the sighted disabled. It does not involve an augmentation system: the basis is that the County Council makes an annual contribution to the undertaking for each disabled person employed: it is re-negotiated from time to time, in the light of current costs. The County Council claims capitation grunt from the Ministry of Labour on this expenditure. The disabled workers (who number about 30) are paid wages at the Local Authority Group II rate for non-mnnual workers: there is no bonus system and no tax-free element.

29. Disabilities include tuberculosis and other chest complaints, amputation, epilepsy, arthritis, etc.

30. The products are mainly woodwork. There are six disabled workers on wood mill machinery: the rest are mainly on assembly. Articles produced include deck-chairs and other garden furniture, and large wooden toys (push-horses, dolls' cots, blackboards, etc.). These are successfully sold on the ordinary commercial market, in competition with similar products, because of their good quality, which has built up much goodwill for the LuDun brand name. Some sub-contracting has been undertaken but recently much work has been turned away because of the demand for LuDun's own products.

31. The trading loss per severely disabled employee has been about £400 per annum in the past three years; the County Council contribution meets about 75 per cent. of this loss.

Haven Products, Hillington, Glasgow

32. This is a non-profit making limited company formed in 1946 to provide sheltered employment for severely disabled ex-Service men and women: it now accepts other disabled persons also. The project was sponsored by members of the Hillington Industrial Estates Association and was approved for grant in March, 1946. It was at first concerned with the production of electrical blankets. The demand for these goods fell after some years and it was found necessary to introduce other trades—light leather work, knitwear and hosiery. The light leatherwork department closed down during 1959 and the undertaking is now engaged solely on the mnnufacture of knitted garments. Modern machines are used. There are about 20 severely disabled workers (men and women) and a few able-bodied employees. The types of disability include: paralysis, paraplegia, mentally ill or handicapped, asthma, fragility of bones, spinal disease, gunshot wounds, kidney malformation, double amputations.

33. The goods are normally sold through wholesalers. The manager has built up good relations with all those in the area. At present most of the machines are working on a contract provided on a commission basis by a commercial firm.

34. Wages paid to the women workers are about £5 10s. 0d., for a 42 hour week, and the men's wages are about £7 10s. 0d.

35. The policy of the undertaking has been to pass on to open industry all suitable cases, after perhaps two or three years in sheltered employment. In this they have been very successful. Yet at the same time they have continued to avoid heavy trading losses and have recently made a small net profit.

36. It is thought that much of the success of this concern is due to the advice and guidance given by the honorary directors, who are industrialists.

St. Loyes College Sheltered Workshop

37. The St. Loyes Training College for the Disabled, opened in 1937, provides residential vocational training for the severely disabled, with financial help from the Ministry of Labour. Normally trainees are placed in ordinary employment, but it was found that a few could not be so placed, and a sheltered workshop for this group was opened by the College in 1943, and approved for Ministry of Labour grant.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

38. Originally there was a watch and clock production unit but this was transferred, with its disabled workers, to Devon Instruments Ltd. (see below) when that concern was established in 1947. The sheltered workshop now consists of a gear-cutting and clock repairing department, which does work for Devon Instruments Ltd. and also for other customers, and a leather goods department working mainly on large contracts for Government Departments, local authorities and private firms.

39. It is a small workshop with only 16 employees of whom 14 are severely disabled.

40. Disabilities include cardiac trouble, effects of polio, tuberculosis, epilepsy, effects of wounds, etc.

41. The working week is 44 hours (5 day week). Wages for the severely disabled men range from 3s. 4d. to 3s. 11d. per hour (6s. 4d. for one employed as a working foreman).

42. Since 1953, when the workshop underwent reorganisation, trading losses have been reduced from £193 per severely disabled employee per annum to less than £29 in 1961.

B. DEVON INSTRUMENTS LTD.

43. The attention of the Working Party was drawn to this firm as a result of a resolution from the Exeter Disablement Advisory Committee.

44. The firm operates as a commercial undertaking and receives no grant from public funds. It was established shortly after the Second World War, with the object of employing at least 75 per cent. of severely disabled people. Its nucleus was a watch and clock production unit which was formerly part of the sheltered workshop at the St. Loyes Training College for the Disabled. Close association with the College was maintained, but local disabled people as well as ex-trainees from St. Loyes were recruited and production was expanded into mechanical engineering and surgical boot and shoe work as well as watch and clock work. Up to 1952 the firm incurred losses but since 1955 it has made a profit.

45. Under a Board of Directors the company is run by a managing director and two administrative assistants. It has three sections as follows:

(a) The assembly of clocks, recorders and clockwork mechanisms

The firm has a special knowledge of clockwork mechanism and undertakes very specialised work. Recently it has been mainly engaged on the production of prototypes for other firms. In November, 1960, the department consisted of an able-bodied chargehand and seven other workers of whom five were disabled, and of these, three were so seriously disabled that they would probably be regarded, if unemployed, as eligible for sheltered employment. Average weekly wages for disabled men ranged from £9 9s. 0d. to £15.

(b) Machine Department

This is at present the most profitable department. It is engaged in the manufacture of turned parts on capstan lathes with supplementary operations such as drilling and milling. In order to utilise the machine tools to the utmost extent both day and night shifts are worked. In November, 1960, there were ten employees, of whom eight were disabled, six of them so seriously that they would probably be regarded, if unemployed, as eligible for sheltered employment. The average weekly earnings of the disabled workers ranged from £12 13s. 0d. to £17 17s. 0d. There is an incentive bonus scheme.

(c) Surgical Boot and Shoe

Only one man is now employed in this department. He was formerly registered as a disabled person.

46. In the year ended 30th November, 1961, the firm's profit was equal to 6 per cent. of the turnover.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

47. The following factors are considered to have contributed to the firm's success:

(1) Most jobs are "quantity produced", and all are properly tooled.

(2) All workers are now fully qualified for their respective jobs.

(3) They are supervised by key workers, highly skilled in the various branches of the firm's manufactures.

(4) At least one member of the Board is a fully qualified engineer, and advice is available on all questions of design and other technical matters.

(5) Costs are scrutinised monthly and very close attention is paid to finance.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Appendix 14

INFORMATION CONCERNING WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND ABROAD

Introductory Note

1. Labour Attachés of the Ministry of Labour provided the Working Pnrty with reports on arrangements made in other countries for the employment of blind persons, particularly in workshops for the blind. The Working Party also had the benefit of first-hand accounts from some members of what they had seen during overseas visits.

2. In addition to the considerable volume of information collected hy the Lahour Attaché in Washington, members had the opportunity of seeing a film kindly made available by the National Industries of the Blind about workshops for the blind in the U.S.A. Very helpful and useful information was also given to officers of the Ministry of Labour hy a member of the staff of this orgnnisation during a visit to Great Britain.

3. A delegation from the All-Russia Society for the blind, which visited Great Britain in 1960, was good enough to attend a meeting of the Working Party to give detailed information about the employment of the blind in Russia.

4. The Working Party wishes to place on record its appreciation nf, and thanks for, all the help given by all the public authorities and voluntary organisations overseas and the assistance received from the Labour Attachés of the Ministry of Labour.

5. Although the pattern of workshop employment for the blind in many countries is on familiar, traditional lines, in others some interesting developments are taking place. Some brief notes about these are contained in the following paragraphs.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

General

6. In the U.S.A., workshops are regarded as part of the vocational rehabilitation programme for physically handicapped persons including the blind. This is administered by the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and within this office there is a Division of Services to the Blind. The main responsibility for providing services rests on State authorities with financial help from Federal sources for training and research. In 38 States vocational rehabilitation services for blind persons (i.e. all services connected with resettlement in employment) are provided by State agencies. In the remainder of the States these services are provided by voluntary organisations.

7. Detailed statistics of the kind available in Great Britain have not so far been compiled in America, either by the Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitntion or any of the national agencies for the blind, and there is no uniformity in the scope, nature, or standards of services provided by a vast number of State and local agencies for the blind. For these and other reasons, it was not possible tn obtain comprehensive information about the employment of the blind in America. It was, however, clear that a high proportion of the employed blind work under ordinary conditions; some authorities put the figures as high as 75 to 80 per cent. In addition to a wide variety of work in factories and offices, a considerable number of blind persons are employed in the management of sales kiosks.

8. Many of the organisations controlling workshops in the United States are concerned with other aspects of blind welfare, such as industrial rehabilitation, vocational guidance, placing in open employment and general welfare. It would seem that some workshops are little more than occupational centres while others are used as training centres for ordinary employment.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

National Industries for the Blind

9. There are said to be 116 special workshops for the blind employing about 5,000 workers. Fifty-eight of these (employing about 4,000) are associated in an organisation known as the National Industries for the Blind. This body was set up as a non-profit making agency, in the first instance to handle Government contracts; it is financed entirely by a levy on workshops in respect of sales it makes on their behalf. By an Act passed in 1938, a Committee on Purchases of Blind Made Goods was set up by the Federal Government for the purchase of "brooms, mops and other suitable products made by the blind" for Government Departments. The main requirements of the law are that the articles offered to the Government have to be purchased at a fair market price and be of a satisfactory standard; 75 per cent. of the labour force engaged in their production has to be blind labour and the articles have to be produced by a non-profit making agency for the blind. All such Government orders are channelled through the National Industries for the Blind.

10. Items manufactured for Government contracts include surgical garments, mail bags, bed springs, mattresses, pillow cases, fibre, rayon and cotton mats, brooms, brushes and mats. The availability of these contracts has made it possible for the participating workshops to develop highly mechanised departments. This has been found to be quite possible while still maintaining a proportion of at least 75 per cent. of blind labour and it has resulted in a high level of output. Government contracts now take only one-third of the workshops' output; the rest is disposed of in various ways on the open market, some through the N.I.B., some locally by individual workshops. Sales are made through wholesale channels, to supermarkets, by arranging exhibition stands in Government and other large offices and also door-to-door.

11. The National Industries for the Blind assists participating workshops in a variety of ways besides sales. In addition to the general manager and assistant manager, the N.I.B. has a specialist staff covering the following fields of activity: (1) purchase of raw materials and sale of goods; (2) production; and (3) public relations. In March, 1962, its staff totalled 28. It fosters co-operation between workshops and gives advice on factory layout, methods of production and distribution, and has on hand an extensive research programme to determine the most suitable forms of employment for blind workers in sheltered workshops.

Wages

12. There is no national standard of wage payments made to workers in workshops for the blind. The general practice appears to be to pay the blind worker the ordinary piece rates for the job and, where considered necessary, to make supplementary payments. The Fair Labor Standards Act lays down a national minimum wage of $1.15 per hour (to be increased to $1.25 by 1963) for industrial workers, but a considerable number of workshops for the blind have obtained certificates of exemption. Under these the Department of Labor has approved in some cases a minimum wage as low as 10 cents. an hour, though the average minimum approved rates in the workshops are 53 cents. an hour. However, it is said that the wages paid in workshops associated with the N.I.B. averaged $1.17 (without supplementation) at a time when the national minimum wage was $1.00 and that the high degree of mechanisation has made it possible for many workers in these workshops to receive substantially higher levels of remuneration without any supplementation.

13. One agency, Industrial Homes for the Blind, Brooklyn, New York, gave an interesting account of the wages structure they had devised to provide a reasonable income to workers and good incentive to production. The qualifying standard for admission to this workshop represents about 40 per cent. of the output of workers on similar work in outside industry. In addition, workers receive a grant which varies according to their piecework earnings but which guarantees them a minimum wage of about two-thirds of the wages payable to fit workers. Each worker is assigned a basic rate for three months, which reflects his earnings in the previous three months, and the wage supplement decreases as his earnings increase, until he reaches a level just short of the minimum rate payable to fit workers, after which he receives what he earns without supplement.

Costs

14. It has not been possible to obtain details of the cost per head of operating any workshop, though it was explained that their sources of revenue were from voluntary donations,

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

sales of goods and State subsidies. It is claimed that some of the workshops associated with the National Industries for the Blind are self-supporting, and that the aim (generally realised) is that the cost of operation should not exceed half of what is paid in wages.

Work Undertaken

15. The following are examples of new lines of production undertaken in various workshops in the U.S.A.:

(a) the assembling and packing of toys. All component parts are supplied by the manufacturer and the blind workers cement parts together, assemble the toys and pack them;

(b) the making of wooden cases used in the soft drink industry and of wooden dowels used in toy manufacturing. The blind operate dowel machines, lathes, radial saws, drill presses and other machines, all of which are protected by special safety devices;

(c) the manufacture of arrows, bullets, pistol grips, rifle and shotgun stocks for sporting goods firms;

(d) a machine shop contract service involving the operation by the blind of turret lathes, cutting machines, drill presses, punch presses and tapping machines.

Handcrest Incorporated

16. An account was received of a successful example of a State financed workshop working in conjunction with a private Corporation to manufacture and market its own products. This workshop was at first engaged in basket weaving and ceramics and when it was decided to diversify its products a new superintendent was appointed, who worked closely with the sales manager of a private company known as Handcrest Incorporated. Two new departments were set up:

(1) a metal products department equipped with presses, drills, lathes and cutting machines which engaged in sub-contract work for industrial undertakings;

(2) hand-woven goods manufacture. Neckties manufactured in this department are now sold throughout the United States and Handcrest Incorporated acts as sole distributor.

17. The blind workers are said to be paid on a scale comparable with that of industry in general and sales have increased year by year for the past four years. The combined operation of the workshops and Handcrest Incorporated is now self-supporting.

Goodwill Industries

18. In addition to special workshops for the blind there are 125 sheltered workshops known as Goodwill Industries, which cater for all categories of disabled workers. Over 40,000 disabled persons are provided with training or employment each year, of whom approximately 2,000 are blind.

19. Each workshop in this organisation is affiliated by payment of a percentage of its earned income to a national body, Goodwill Industries of America, Incorporated, which, with a small staff in Washington, D.C., prepares and distributes publicity material and maintains contact with Government Departments and voluntary organisations. It also provides specialist advisory services to the individual workshops and sets out standards of managerial, accountancy and workshop procedures, which are particularly valuable at the time of setting up a new workshop or expanding an existing one.

20. There are considerable variations between the individual workshops, but their basic work is the collection of discarded goods from within their own areas and the employment of severely disabled persons in reconditioning those goods for re-sale to the public. In practice the sections most commonly found in Goodwill Industries are clothing, household appliances, electrical goods, radio and television and furniture. The incoming materials are sorted and passed to the relevant departments, where they are repaired, reconditioned or modernised by handicapped people working under the supervision of skilled chargehands. Such occupations as general laundry worker, calender hand, seamstress, tailor, presser, radio and television service engineer, cabinet maker, polisher, upholsterer and general electrical appliance servicing, are followed and training in these occupations is given.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

21. Each workshop is responsible for its own finance and for its sales organisation. Federal and State Government financial aid is limited to research projects and to per capita fees for specialised training and rehabilitation services. All types of disabilities are accepted into the Goodwill organisation and are allocated according to the workshop facilities and to the aptitude of the individual. The blind workers are employed in a wide variety of occupations.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

22. Oral evidence was received from representatives of the All-Russia Society for the Blind on the occasion of their visit to this country in October, 1960. We also had the advantage of a report from one of our members who had recently visited the U.S.S.R. at the invitation of the All-Russia Society.

23. We were informed that all blind persons in the U.S.S.R. receive a pension sufficient for their support, but that many volunteer for and are provided with employment, mainly in special workshops for blind workers which are run by the All-Russia Society. It is considered that the blind work best in such factories. There are few blind persons in ordinary industry, though there are considerable numbers in agriculture and some in the professions. Training, over a period of some two years, is given in the workshops where the blind are to be employed.

24. There are 272 special workshops employing 42,000 blind persons. Some are very large, and often special housing is provided nearby for the blind workers. On average, each workshop has about 67 per cent. blind and 33 per cent. sighted fit labour. The proportions in particular factories vary according to the type of process. No sighted disabled are employed. The aim of the Society has for some time been to replace the old blind handcrafts with mechanical processes, on which they find the blind can be employed quite safely, and much progress has been made. It is claimed that, though the capital provision was met from State funds, no subsidy is now received towards running costs, apart from exemption from taxation, and that the workshops are self-supporting, paying the blind the same wages as sighted workers. They work a 36-hour week with a month's holiday a year.

25. Technical and engineering staff are employed by the Society to ensure most modern methods of production. Refresher courses of two months' duration are provided for all managerial and supervisory staff, blind and sighted, every 2 to 3 years, to enable them to keep abreast of the latest developments in industry. Importance is attached to safety and good working conditions.

26. Articles produced fall into four main groups:

(1) Components for general industry, e.g. for motor-car manufacture. Arrangements are often made for a blind workshop to make the whole supply of some particular component, acting more or less as a department of the factory concerned. This works well as the latter has then an interest in advising on the best production methods.

(2) Goods, mainly electrical, produced on State contracts, e.g. electric motors, condensers, switchgear, transformers, radio and telephone components.

(3) Consumer goods, e.g. furniture, knitwear, metal articles, sent to a selling organisation.

(4) Goods produced from local raw materials for local markets, e.g. mats, brushes, window fasteners, stationery, cardboard boxes, knitwear.

27. The following are examples of articles produced in the Russian workshops for the blind:

Oil filters for motor vehicles

Metal containers (e.g. for shoe polish)

Electric light fittings

Nails, screws, safety pins, chains

Wooden tools

Soap

Ceramics

Springs, hasps, hinges, suitcase fittings

Complete manufacture and assembly of fibre suitcases

Bicycle and motor cycle wheel spokes

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Wooden tables and other furniture, chairs, cupboards, boxes

Felt boots, leather footwear

Plastic and cotton shopping bags

Caps for bottles (pressed from Thermo-plastic)

Woven cord, boot laces.

THE NETHERLANDS

General System of Social Workshops

28. The Municipal Social Employment Prnvisinn for Manual Workers (GSW) was inaugurated in the Netherlands in January, 1950. The aim was to pruvide employment for unemployed persons, especially the disabled, but also for "sueial misfits" with the nim of getting as many as possible back to normal employment as soon as possihle. The workshops therefore fulfil the functions of industrial rehabilitation centres as well as those of sheltered workshops.

29. It is stated that in the early days of the scheme, when the newly opened workshops were receiving disabled people who had had no previous opportunity for employment, as many as 30 to 40 per cent. of the workers passed tn ordinary employment yearly, but the proportion is now much smaller.

30. Responsibility for making the necessary provision rests with local authorities subsidised by the central Gnvernment. This subsidy is paid oaly in respect of people capahle of at least one-third of the uutput of a normal fit worker. The earliest municipal projects tuok the form of open air work (laying out of parks, etc.) and some of these are still in operation but the majority of people now covered by the G.S.W. scheme are in "sneial workshops" of which two-thirds are run by municipalities nnd the rest by voluntary nrganisntions. Scales of wages for workers in ordinary Dutch industry are all fixed by central negutiatiun, the worker's precise pay being determined by a system of merit rating within the scale. Special senles are applied in the social workshops. They begin at a minimum figure which is ahnut 90 per cent. of the minimum wage in ordinary industry but the maximum of the special scale is very much lower than in outside work. The system of merit rating withia the scale is preserved so that a worker can increase his earnlngs by good work; quality and behaviour are taken into account as well as output. The aim is to approximate tu ordinary industrial conditinns; the working week is the same as that fnr Dutch industry generally. The general level of output is appruximately 35 per cent. of normal fit workers.

31. Workshops for the disabled (including workshops for the blind) which were in existence before the establishment nf the GSW scheme, were able to take advantage uf it by obtaining the Government subsidy paid through the local authority.

32. The Government subsidy is at the rate of 75 per ceat. of wages paid to the disabled, plus 50 per cent. of management salaries; gond management is regarded as of first importance. The subsidy is intended to leave workshops with a surplus over running costs, which they can use for capital development, and usually does so. Only exceptionally has it been necessary for extra subsidy to be paid to cover capital expenditure.

33. There are now 27,500 people in the Netherlands wnrking under sheltered cnnditions, of whom 25,000 are covered by the GSW scheme. Of the latter 16,500 are employed in workshops aad 8,500 in open-air projects.

34. While handcraft work (mats, brushes, weaving, etc.) is still to be fnund, most wurkshops are now engaged on ordiaary industrial work. Sometimes this is undertaken on lncal authority contracts and there is some production for the opea market; but mnst of the wnrk is done on a sub-contract basis for private firms, which are expected to pay the workshops, for any contract provided, whatever it would have cost to get the work done in their own factories. These arrangements are snid to he much more economic than the old handcrafts or than production for the open market. At first there were difficulties beauuse the wnrk was not always up to standard: but these were overcome by the appoiatment, on the workshops' payroll, of inspectors from the outside firms coacerned. Such arrangeaents elearly presuppose long term contracts; it is understood that these usually take the form of repeat orders rather than contracts for a definite period of a year or more. Sume firms regularly give all sub-contracts for certain items to the social workshops.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

35. There is no central system for negotiation or allocation of contracts; normally each workshop manager arranges his own. However, there are regional federations of workshops which cover all provinces of the country and whose aims include the promotion of co-operation and avoidance of competition, the co-ordination of price policy and the regulation of sales and products. These federations may also assist in obtaining orders.

The Place of the Blind in the General System

36. There are about 400 blind people employed in the general social workshops alongside other disabled. The following are examples of work on which they are employed: the dismantling and reconditioning of radio-rediffusion apparatus; the assembly and stamping out, by machine, of parts for television sets; the making of plastic articles by machine; the packing of sweets; and rug making.

37. There were special workshops for the blind in the Netherlands, engaged mainly on traditional trades, before the inception of the GSW scheme, and 14 are still in existence. The GSW scheme has been applied to nine of them, employing on 1st July, 1961, 559 blind people, of whom only 422 count for subsidy (the rest having too low an output); some of these workshops now admit sighted disabled. The other five workshops, which have about 300 workers, receive a lower subsidy of less than £1 per head per week under a separate scheme.

38. The traditional crafts are still usual in the special workshops for the blind, though some non-traditional work is now being introduced, especially where sighted disabled are employed; but it is expected that in time the old handcrafts will die out, as they are not being taught to young blind people, who are in general trained for ordinary employment. Future blind entrants to the sheltered workshops are expected to comprise only people with additional handicaps and some of those who have gone blind in later life. In these circumstances it is expected that the special workshops will be increasingly absorbed in the general social workshops and that the types of work will be changed to those in the latter.

SWEDEN

39. In Sweden there are workshops in which the blind are employed on traditional handcrafts; these are run entirely by the Associations for the Blind.

40. Blind persons may also be admitted to sheltered workshops catering for all classes of the disabled which have been set up in recent years by the public authorities. These sheltered workshops normally undertake sub-contract work from local firms, who pay the same rates as if the work had been done in their own workshops, together with an additional payment intended to cover part of the overhead costs of the sheltered workshop. State subsidies are received by the authority operating the workshop towards the cost of erecting or purchasing or renting premises and to meet 40 per cent. of the cost of supervisors' salaries.

41. A well-equipped and up-to-date engineering workshop is run by the City of Stockholm primarily for the blind; it employs 20 blind persons, men and women, on gear cutting, threading, turning with turret lathes, cold saw cutting, drilling, grinding, deburring, filing and inspection; packing and other jobs.

42. Also of interest is a company known as BLIFA operated by the Stockholm Association for the Blind. It manufactures (by normal industrial processes) soaps, detergents, waxes, polishes, candles, flares and hand and hair preparations. Of the total of 59 workers, including the manager, 33 are blind. The sighted workers are engaged as office staff, laboratory staff, salesmen or van drivers. This company obtains most of its raw materials at State-subsidised prices but otherwise it is said to receive no subsidy. Its customers are mostly big consumers such as the central purchasing offices for County Council hospitals, the State railway and also large firms of office cleaners. In addition it accepts sub-contracts on behalf of ordinary firms, particularly jobs where manual dexterity is required, for example, packing luxury candles.

43. The blind workers are conditioned to an eight hour day, but with overtime the average working week is 48 hours (the statutory working week being 45 hours in Sweden).

44. The workers receive a basic hourly rate to which is added a special piecework bonus based on output, the total bonus being divided on the basis of hours worked. It is said that wages closely approach those for similar work in ordinary industry.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

45. Productivity is said to range from 75 to 120 per cent. of that of fully sighted workers, though a few elderly workers do not exceed 45 per cent. The average age of employees is 45 to 50.

NORWAY

46. Information was received about an interesting experiment at Bergen which is said to be proving successful.

47. A company called the Blind Engineering Industry Limited, was floated at Bergen in January, 1958, with the help of loans from the Westland Blind Institute, the County Assistance Fund and the National Insurance Institute. The loans were free of interest, free of repayment for a period of three years and thereafter were to be repaid in half-yearly instalments spread over 12 years. The building used for the project is old and not very suitable, but it belongs to the Blind Institute and is occupied rent free.

48. The main class of work undertaken is the manufacture of variable pitch propellers for small diesel and petrol engines, mostly for American outboard motors which are imported without propellers; in addition a large number of screws, nuts and bolts are made for local firms. Most of the machines were bought second-hand at low prices and included centre lathes, turret lathes and milling, drilling and grinding machines.

49. The first blind worker began work in August, 1958, and by April, 1960, the number of blind workers had risen to seven and a sighted toolmaker had been engaged. None of the workers had had previous experience of machine tool work. Training and work-aids were therefore provided as needed.

50. The Blind Institute of Norway reported that, after six months' working, it was apparent that the business could become a paying proposition, and that the blind had shown that they could maintain the high-speed production which was necessary when competing with other manufacturers. Wages are said to be at normal rates. At the beginning of January, 1961, it was reported that 12 men were working at 10 machines and that 20 men would be given employment if the space and plant were available.

AUSTRALIA

51. An interesting venture of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind at Melbourne, Australia, was reported in the annual report of the Society and the Superintendent was good enough to supply additional information.

52. Because of declining demand for goods made in the workshops the Institute appointed a new factory manager with a considerable knowledge and experience of management, research and production in ordinary industry, to introduce modern methods and new types of work.

53. A new department for the pre-packing of sugar and other foodstuffs was set up and has been operating successfully and the workshop now claims to be one of the largest pre-packing concerns in Victoria. Most of the large grocery firms in Melbourne place stocks of sugar and other foodstuffs in the workshop and these are packed and delivered by the Institute on a weekly roster system to retailers in the district. There are also private customers who purchase sugar direct.

54. The sugar is packed in distinctive bags which advertise the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind. The workshop also advertises by radio and television and in trade papers and at exhibitions. On entering the sugar pre-packing field the workshop took the initiative in forming, with other firms, the Pre-Packers Association of Victoria with a view to stabilising prices. The work is said to be increasing with the advent of self-service grocery stores.

55. All tasks, other than supervision, truck driving and clerical work, can be carried out by unskilled labour and blind persons are said to be able to reach full working speed and efficiency within a working week of five days. The ratio of sighted to blind workers is 1 to 1·26.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

56. Under the Manufacturing Grocers Award the rate of pay for workers in outside industry is £A15 2s. 0d. per week and the blind workers agreed to have their efficiency assessed and to be paid accordingly. Practically all of them have been assessed as 100 per cent. and they earn the trade rate of £A15 2s. 0d. per week (in addition to a Government pension of £A5 per week).

57. In repetition food packaging work, the blind have proved to be as efficient as the sighted and, although in outside industry the work is normally done by girls, it has been found that, when plant and press mill are operating efficiently and continuity of work is maintained, the department can be almost self-supporting.

PRINTED BY H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE PRESS, MANCHESTER

Wt.2210/9126. K44. 9/62. Mcr.(5299).

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

© *Crown copyright* 1962

Printed and published by
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased from
York House, Kingsway, London W.C.2
423 Oxford Street, London W.1
13A Castle Street, Edinburgh 2
109 St. Mary Street, Cardiff
39 King Street, Manchester 2
50 Fairfax Street, Bristol 1
35 Smallbrook, Ringway, Birmingham 5
80 Chichester Street, Belfast 1
or through any bookseller

Printed in England

S.O. Code No. 36 369

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

Report of the Working Party on Workshops for the Blind

LONDON
HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
1962

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Membership of the Working Party

CHAIRMAN: J. G. STEWART, ESQ., C.B., C.B.E.,
Under-Secretary, Ministry of Labour

E. M. Amphlett, Esq., C.B.E., M.C.
Chairman of the Blind Persons Committee of the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled

C. H. Beckett, Esq.
National Industrial Officer, National Union of General and Municipal Workers

A. Brown, Esq.
General Manager of the Royal Glasgow Asylum for the Blind; Member of the Joint Industrial Council for Scottish Workshops for the Blind

J. C. Colligan, Esq., O.B.E.
Secretary-General, Royal National Institute for the Blind

R. A. Joseph, Esq.
Industrialist

Mrs. D. M. Kent
Ministry of Labour

Miss M. O'Conor, O.B.E.
Chairman of the Children and Welfare Committee, County Councils Association

W. H. Pascoe, Esq.
Secretary, National Association of Workshops for the Blind

T. H. Smith, Esq., M.B.E.
General Secretary, National League of the Blind

SECRETARY:
A. E. Wilson, Esq., M.B.E.
Ministry of Labour

The estimated cost of the preparation of this Report is £3,002 of which £1,874 represents the estimated cost of printing and publishing the Report in this edition and the Braille edition.

(5299) A 2

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Contents

PREFACE . . . . . *page* xi

Part I. General Description of the Origins and Present Situation of the Workshops for the Blind in Great Britain

	Paragraph	*Page No.*
HISTORY UP TO 1939	1	1
HISTORY SINCE 1939		
Changes in the Legal, Financial and Administrative Arrangements for the Workshops	13	3
The Change in the Employment Position of the Blind and its Effect on the Workshops	16	4
The Piercy Report of 1956 and the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1958	20	6
WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND TODAY		
General	21	6
Management, Organisation and Supervision . . .	24	7
The Blind Workers and their Work	26	8
Recruitment of Blind Workers Today	31	10
Sighted Fit Workers in the Workshops	32	11
Sighted Disabled Workers in the Workshops . . .	34	11
The Marketing of Goods Made in the Workshops .	37	12
Hours and Wages	43	13
Qualifying Standards of Output for New Entrants .	48	15
Special Inquiry into Remuneration—April 1959 . .	49	15
The Cost of the Workshops	52	16
Financial Assistance to Workshops	57	17
Part II. The Future Demand for Workshop Places . .	60	19

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Part III. Conclusions and Recommendations

	Paragraph	Page No.
(A) THE ROLE OF THE WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND UNDER MODERN CONDITIONS	67	23
RECOMMENDATION No. 1	73	25
RECOMMENDATION No. 2	73	25
(B) THE MEASURES NEEDED TO ENABLE THE WORKSHOPS TO FULFIL THEIR ROLE AS EFFICIENTLY AND ECONOMICALLY AS POSSIBLE		
General	74	25
The Need to Move Away from Handcrafts	78	26
The Need for a Central Organisation	86	28
The Proposed Functions and Structure of a Central Organisation	91	29
Finance and the Relation of the Corporation to the Ministry of Labour Grant System	98	31
RECOMMENDATION No. 3	100	31
RECOMMENDATION No. 4	100	31
Ministry of Labour Inspection: Accounting	102	32
RECOMMENDATION No. 5	103	32
Blind Women Workers	104	32
The Need for Concentration of Trades	105	33
RECOMMENDATION No. 6	106	33
Management (General)	107	33
RECOMMENDATION No. 7	112	34
Group Management of Workshops	113	34
RECOMMENDATION No. 8	115	35
The Need for a Co-ordinated Programme of Capital Development	116	35
RECOMMENDATION No. 9	123	37
Marketing	124	37
General	124	37
RECOMMENDATION No. 10	129	38
Sub-contracting and Sponsorship Arrangements	130	38
RECOMMENDATION No. 11	133	39

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

	Paragraph	Page No.
Government Contracts	134	39
RECOMMENDATION No. 12	136	39
Standards of Output to be Expected of Blind Workers	138	40
RECOMMENDATION No. 13	143	41
Recruitment	144	41
RECOMMENDATION No. 14	145	41
RECOMMENDATION No. 15	147	41
Training of Blind Workers	149	41
General	149	41
RECOMMENDATION No. 16	151	42
Blind Adolescents	152	42
RECOMMENDATION No. 17	153	42
The Wages System	154	42
General: The Augmentation System	154	42
The Lack of Incentive: Attempts to Overcome it by Bonus Schemes	157	43
Other Disadvantages of the Augmentation System .	170	46
Proposed New Wages System	174	48
RECOMMENDATION No. 18	178	49
Proposed Joint Industrial Council	180	49
RECOMMENDATION No. 19	184	50
Future Financial Arrangements between Local Authorities and Voluntary Workshops	186	50
RECOMMENDATION No. 20	186	50
(C) THE EXTENT TO WHICH IT IS PRACTICABLE AND DESIRABLE TO COMBINE THE PROVISION OF SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT FOR THE BLIND WITH SIMILAR PROVISION FOR OTHER SERIOUSLY DISABLED PERSONS	187	50
RECOMMENDATION No. 21	192	52
RECOMMENDATION No. 22	192	52
RECOMMENDATION No. 23	192	52
CONCLUDING NOTE	193	52

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

APPENDICES

	Page No.
1. List of Organisations and Individuals who Submitted Evidence	53
2. Tables Showing Comparison Between the Number of Persons Registered as Blind and Those in Employment in 1941, 1949, 1955 and 1960	56
3. Approved Workshops for the Blind in Great Britain . . .	59
4. Age-distribution of Blind Persons in Open Employment and in Workshops for the Blind	79
5. Analysis of Trades Followed by Blind Persons in Employment and Training in Workshops for the Blind at 31st May, 1960 .	80
6. Age-distribution of Trainees in Workshops for the Blind at 30th June, 1960	81
7. Severely Disabled Sighted Persons in Workshops for the Blind at 31st March, 1962	82
8. (a) "Qualifying Standards" of Piece Work Earnings January, 1962	84
(b) "Minimum Wage" January, 1962	84
9. Survey of Persons Newly Registered as Blind in 1960 . . .	85
10. Analysis of Evidence Concerning Workshops for the Blind in Great Britain	93
A. The need for the workshops and the classes of blind persons for whom they should cater	93
B. Work done in workshops for the blind and the question of introducing new trades	95
C. Marketing arrangements	98
D. Government Contracts Summary of consideration by the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled of the allocation of government contracts to sheltered workshops	
(a) *General*	100
(b) *Competition between H.M. Prisons and sheltered workshops*	101
E. The wages system	102
F. Management in workshops: need for specialisation, grouping and amalgamation	105
G. The need for a central organisation	107
H. The employment of severely disabled sighted persons in workshops for the blind	109

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Page No.

11. Report of a Survey of Thirteen Workshops for the Blind . . . 111
Introduction 111
Summary of the Survey Officers' Report 111
Premises 112
Management 112
Supervision 112
The workers 113
The shop floor 114
Rates of absence 116
Marketing 116
Design 116
Wages 117
The effects of income tax 118
General overheads 119
Accounting 120
Costing of products 121
Conclusions 121

12. Evidence Submitted by Remploy Limited 122
Organisation 122
The disabled employees 123
The nature of work, production methods, etc. 123
The Remploy wages system 124
The Remploy estimating system 127
Purchasing 127
The Remploy marketing system 127
Contracts 128
Sponsorship schemes 129

13. Information Concerning Other Workshops for the Sighted Disabled in Great Britain 130
A. Grant Aided Workshops
Lord Roberts Workshops 130
Sir Robert Jones Memorial Workshops 131
Dorincourt 131
Sherwood Industries 132
LuDun 132
Haven Products 133
St. Loyes College Sheltered Workshop 133
B. Devon Instruments Limited 134

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Page No.

14. Information Concerning Workshops for the Blind Abroad . . 136
United States of America 136
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics 139
The Netherlands 140
Sweden 141
Norway 142
Australia 142

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit

Preface

The Working Party was appointed by the Minister of Labour, with the following terms of reference:

> "To review the employment facilities currently provided in workshops for the blind; to consider (a) the role of the workshops under modern conditions; (b) the measures which may be needed to enable them to fulfil that role as efficiently and economically as possible; (c) the extent to which it is practicable and desirable to combine the provision of sheltered employment for the blind with similar provision for other seriously disabled persons; and to make recommendations."

The appointment was announced by the Minister in reply to a Parliamentary Question in June, 1960.

The proposal to set up a Working Party had previously been discussed by the Blind Persons Committee of the National Advisory Council on the Employment of the Disabled, and by the Council itself, and received their full support.

The first meeting of the Working Party was held on 22nd July, 1960. We have held altogether 20 meetings, and have also visited, collectively or individually, many workshops, including some in Scotland, where one of our meetings was held and oral evidence received from Scottish organisations.

Evidence was received from 48 organisations and individuals. A full list appears in Appendix 1. We wish to express our thanks for the valuable assistance which they have rendered.

The Report is in the following form. In Part I we have given a short factual description of the history of the workshops for the blind, and their situation today. In Part II we make an estimate of the future demand for workshop places. In Part III we report our conclusions and recommendations. The evidence and other information we received, and the results of special surveys undertaken by the Ministry of Labour on our behalf, are summarised in the Appendices to the Report.

Printed image digitised by the University of Southampton Library Digitisation Unit